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STUDIES

IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

The Most Postmodern Prayer

American Jesuit Identity and the Examen of Conscience, 1920 - 1990

JOSEPH A. TETLOW, S.J.

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THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

A group of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States.

The Seminar studies topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material which it publishes.

The Seminar focuses its direct attention on the life and work of the Jesuits of the United States. The issues treated may be common also to Jesuits of other regions, to other priests, religious, and laity, to both men and women. Hence the Studies, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

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Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J.

STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

26/1: January 1994

Please see inside back cover for new subscription pricing and ordering information.

For your information . . .

We are twenty-five! The "we" refers to *Studies* and to the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality, which produces this journal, and the "twenty-five" refers to the twenty-five years that they have both now existed. Part of our celebration is our new cover design and our new interior typeface, chosen to enhance the attractiveness and readability of *Studies.* We hope you like them.

In 1968 provincials of the United States Assistancy decided to establish a Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality and named Father George E. Ganss as its chairman. At the end of that year and through the first part of 1969, the first eleven members met four times to decide on the objectives of the Seminar, to organize the work, to prepare and discuss its first topics, and to determine how the results of its work were to be disseminated.

The initial result of all that work was the inaugural issue of *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* in September 1969, "A Profile of the Contemporary Jesuit: His Challenges and Opportunities," by John R. Sheets, S.J., who was at that time professor of theology at Marquette University and who is at present auxiliary bishop of Fort Wayne–South Bend, Indiana.

During these twenty-five years, seventy-seven United States Jesuits have been or are members of the Seminar. In this issue we shall list the first group of members. In a later issue all past and present members will be listed.

Because of all the work involved in getting the Seminar started, it was able to produce only two issues of *Studies* in its first year and in the second year, three issues. For the third and every year since then, five issues have appeared. This present January 1994 *Studies* is the one hundred and twenty-first of the series. The complete list of titles you will find on the last pages of this issue.

To many people our thanks are due: to the provincials in 1968 for the idea of the Seminar and *Studies;* to their Committee on Spiritual Ministries, at that time chaired by John Edwards of New Orleans, for working out the first plans; to the initial Seminar members and to all who followed them as they made those plans a continuing reality in the life of the Society of Jesus in the United States. Most especially and most appropriately is George Ganss to be thanked. While continuing to head the Institute of Jesuit Sources, not only was he first chairman of the Seminar and founding editor of *Studies* but for seventeen years, from 1968 through 1985, he carried out the responsibilities of both chairman and editor with constancy, intelligence, geniality, and with such success that what started as a service to all of us United States Jesuits has come also to be recognized and appreciated as such far beyond simply the United States and the Society of Jesus.

But we are truly newcomers! At least relatively so. In the last issue of *Studies,* I began this "For your information" essay with the words "Jesuits write." Jesuits also publish. Let me mention two publications with much longer lives and with happy anniversaries at this time.

Fifty years ago, in 1943, *Sources Chrétiennes* was founded in Lyons, France, by Jean Daniélou and Henri de Lubac. Its purpose was to publish vernacular translations of

the Christian writers of antiquity. As Pope John Paul II said for this anniversary occasion, *Sources Chrétiennes* has wanted to allow "the greatest possible number of its readers to appreciate the riches of Christian tradition, the grandeur and loveliness of the faith of our ancestors." To mark this golden jubilee, the series is putting out its four hundredth volume, *The Life of Anthony* by Saint Athanasius. To Father Dominique Bertrand, the present director, and to all the members of *Sources Chrétiennes* thanks, congratulations, and best wishes from *Studies* and the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality.

Exactly one hundred years ago, in 1894, the very first volume of the Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu appeared, the initial volume of Polanco's *Vita Ignatii Loiolæ et rerum Societatis Iesu historia.* The whole Society of Jesus for the past one hundred years and throughout the world has owed and continues to owe an immense debt of gratitude to the Jesuit Historical Institute, to its publications, and to its members. The more than one hundred and forty volumes of the Monumenta and the other publications of the Institute have made available to the Society as a whole and to us individual Jesuits its heritage, its history, its spirituality in a depth and breadth that would not have been possible without the Institute. To Father Charles O'Neill of the New Orleans Province, who was director of the Jesuit Historical Institute for seventeen years, from 1976 to 1993, to Father László Szilas of the Hungarian Province, who has just recently been appointed to that office, and to all the members of the Institute thanks, congratulations, and best wishes from *Studies* and the Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality.

John W. Padberg, S.J.
Editor

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1969

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The Most Postmodern Prayer

American Jesuit Identity and the Examen of Conscience, 1920–1990

Introduction

"Sheer meaningless routine." That is what the examination of conscience has become for Jesuits worldwide. The phrase was written by the director of Rome's Center of Ignatian Spirituality two years ago.[1] Last year, a Chilean Jesuit translated a French Jesuit's article on the examination of conscience and raised an international groan over "esta pesadez y esta esclerosis del examen de consciencia" (this sclerotic sluggishness in the examen).[2]

When I come across remarks like these, I wonder about my own spotty experience and about the struggles of tertians, scholastics, and other Jesuits in the United States. Not long ago, we rarely mentioned the examination of conscience without qualifying it as "an essential exercise of the spiritual life."[3] No more.

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[1] Herbert Alphonso, S.J., *The Personal Vocation: Transformation in Depth through the Spiritual Exercises* (Rome: Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, 1990), 63.

[2] François Partoës, S.J., "¿Por dónde pasa mi Señor? Valor contemplativo del examen," trans. Guido Jonquières, S.J., in *Cuadernos de Espiritualidad* 74 (July–August 1992): 3–48

[3] James Clare, S.J., *The Science of Spiritual Life according to the Spiritual Exercises,* 3rd ed. (London: Manresa Press, 1924), 30.

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What happened to the examination of conscience? Or better, what happened to Jesuits who used to make it and are still supposed to make it?

In this study, I try to tell the story of American Jesuits making the examen in the United States from 1920 on. To tell it at any depth, I had to place the story in the broad context of American social and intellectual history and also in the narrower context of the emergence of an American Catholic spirituality. Each of these contexts is problematic in its own way: Catholics for generations lived "a spiritual life structured by two separate but compatible Catholic and American identities."[4] They did not consider themselves integrated into American intellectual life in any significant way, and they did not consider themselves the originators of a distinctively American Catholic spirituality. Difficult as it is to place the examination of conscience into America's secular and religious contexts, I think we cannot understand it apart from them.

This study might be helpful to others but it is about Jesuits. Even that poses a problem. Some living Jesuits began religious life in the twenties; they have experienced this entire story. Some entered in the middle of the story, as I did myself, briefly encountering examen beads and the rest. Some came in towards the story's end and would not know what examen beads look like. I have, therefore, adopted this rhetorical device: I talk about "them" when I talk about three overlapping cohorts: Jesuits in the United States before our time, non-Catholic Americans, and Catholics standing apart in the so-called Catholic ghetto. I talk about "us"—mainly later in the study—when I talk about three other overlapping cohorts: living Jesuits, postconciliar Catholics, and Americans after American Catholics definitively enculturated themselves as Catholic Americans.

I start this project (section 1) by sketching Jesuit legislation on the examination of conscience and describing the practice of it that has disappeared. For this "accountant's examen," as I call it, (section 2) flourished within the devotional Catholicism of the immigrant church and (section 3) failed when Catholics emerged from the ghetto into the mainstream.

As they gradually emerged, (section 4) Catholics, now as Americans, went through broad changes in the way they perceived themselves and the way they experienced passion, changes that naturally affected their self-examination. What those changes in Jesuits' examination of conscience entailed I summarize as (section 5) "the Aschenbrenner Shift," named for George Aschenbrenner's extraordinary article in the *Review for Religious* in 1971 that both embodied all the changes and gave them direction.

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[4] Joseph P. Chinnici, O.F.M., *Living Stones: The History and Structure of Catholic Spiritual Life in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 165.

Even though this discussion might get abstruse, none of these changes were abstractions; every Jesuit, as American and as Jesuit, has lived through them and introduced them into the examination of conscience. What happened to that exercise as a consequence, I believe, can be vividly illustrated by some images current in writing on masculine spirituality. So I try to describe (section 6) how Jesuits who once lived in the archetypical energies of Warrior made the examination of conscience and how Jesuits who are moving into the archetypical energies of King could now make the examen.

During the seventy years of this story, Jesuits sloughed off Christian rationalism, freed imagination and affectivity in prayer, and began the return to Ignatian discernment. Exploring all this even very cursorily may position us to see (section 7) how we can practice and profit from the examen as what Henry Luce once called "the American century" comes to its end.

The Accountant's Examen

On October 14, 1947, Captain Chuck Yeager looked up at cobalt blue sky and opened the throttle of the X-1, confident he would break the sound barrier, certain he would remember this all his life. Twice that same day, Joe Tetlow, N.S.J., sixteen years old, knelt looking up at a dirty white wall and unpinned his examen beads, confident he was about to break a bad habit, certain he'd be doing this exact exercise the rest of his life.

Jesuits have always considered the legislation on the examination of conscience quite clear. To start with, Master Ignatius wrote in the Constitutions that novices are to "practice the daily examination of their consciences" and scholastics are to "examine their consciences twice each day."[5] Master Ignatius made no rule for the professed and the formed coadjutors, giving only the norm of "discerning love" and openness with superiors.[6] Nonetheless, the earliest

[5] Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus,* ed. and trans. George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), pt. 3, chap. 1, [261] and pt. 4, chap. 4, [342]. Hereafter this volume will be cited as *Constitutions.*

The early companions commonly referred to one another by their academic titles. "Master" Ignatius has further meanings for us.

[6] Ibid., pt. 6, chap. 3, [582f].

formed Jesuits left their axiom about the twice-daily examination of conscience in the official *Directory of 1599:* "After the Exercises are over, the practice ought to be for life."[7] That is surely what Carissimus Tetlow and the other novices were taught after the long retreat.

A long generation before the *Directory,* its axiom had begun to grow into legislation. The First General Congregation in 1558 resisted pressure to impose two hours of prayer on the novices and a common time of prayer on everyone else. But it simply took for granted that everyone was making the examination of conscience and declared that the exercise should last a quarter hour.[8] The Fourth General Congregation in 1581 took the next step: everyone in the Company was to pray an hour each day (as Father General Francis Borgia had directed), and all were to make two quarter-hour examinations of conscience daily. For nearly two centuries, down to the suppression of the Society, that was "the usual examination of conscience" required by the "Summary of the Constitutions."[9]

The practice was reenforced once again after the Society's restoration in 1814 and elaborated in a new edition of the *Epitome* in 1847. Granted that the Constitutions give no general legislation on prayer, nonetheless,

> [A]fter continued consultations on this point, it is prescribed for every member of the Company that he pray an hour each day, that this be the first thing in the morning, and that the prayer is supposed to be devout meditation. Besides this, two quarter hours are to be given each day to examining the conscience, during which time no one should wander out of his room. On feast days when there is a sermon, the morning examination need not be made on the grounds of obligation. The particular examen should be made with special care either at a separate time or at least during each of the two daily examen times.[10]

The men were to be checked on during the times assigned to prayer, the document continued, lest they imagine that they may sleep "ad libitum." This

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[7] "Directorium definitive approbatum," in *Directoria (1540–1599),* ed. Ignacio Iparraguirre, S.J., vol. 76 of Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1955), 647.

[8] "Congregatio Generalis Prima," in *Examen et Constitutiones, Decreta Congregationum Generalium, Formulæ Congregationum,* vol. 2 of *Institutum Societatis Iesu* (Florence: Ex Typographia a SS. Conceptione, 1893), tit. 6, dec. 97f, 177f.

Most of us would presume that *Spiritual Exercises* recommends a quarter hour for this exercise. It doesn't, though the fifth addition recommends a quarter of an hour for the review of meditation.

[9] "Summarium Constitutionum," in *Regulæ, Ratio studiorum, Ordinationes,* vol. 3 of *Institutum Societatis Iesu* (Florence, 1893), 3.

[10] *Epitome Instituti Societatis Iesu,* new ed. (London: Ex Typis Antonii Perisse, 1847), 175.

legislation in the *Epitome* of 1847 was to be repeated almost verbatim a century later in the updated *Epitome* of 1947 and again in the revision of 1962. It is the rule most of us learned and followed from the novitiate on.

Recent general congregations also legislated on the examen. The Thirty-First General Congregation, even as it repealed the law imposing an hour of prayer on everyone in an attempt to get back to Master Ignatius's freedom in prayer, decreed that the examination of conscience "should be made twice a day."[11] The Thirty-Second General Congregation began developing a perspective consonant with the postmodern temperament: the examen might sometimes be communal, and we make it "so that we might be continually guided by the practice of spiritual discernment." The congregation stated plainly, nonetheless, that the exercise should be made "daily."[12] The Thirty-Third General Congregation continued developing this new perspective on the examination of conscience. It made space in its brief decree to urge the development of "a discerning attitude" through three activities: "the examination of conscience, prayer and brotherly dialogue within our communities, and the openness to superiors that facilitates obedience."[13]

It is important to note in passing that none of this legislation detailed how to make the exercise and almost none of it mentioned the general and the particular examen. It would not do so, first of all, because *Spiritual Exercises* did, and any detailing by a congregation or a father general would seem to replace that quasi legislation. But it would not, secondly, because it occurred to no one as necessary. Everyone knew exactly how to make this exercise. The instructions were right in *Spiritual Exercises.*

> METHOD OF MAKING THE GENERAL EXAMEN, CONTAINING FIVE POINTS
>
> The first point is to give thanks to our Lord God for the benefits received.
>
> The second is to ask grace to know and to root out my sins.
>
> The third is to review the time hour by hour, or period by period, from the moment I rose down to the present examination, and to demand an account of my soul, first of my thoughts, then of my words, lastly

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[11] "The 31st General Congregation of the Society of Jesus," in *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus,* ed. with intro. by John W. Padberg, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977), dec. 14, ¶233. This citation refers to the decree and its marginal number. Hereafter these congregations will be cited as *GC 31* or *GC 32.*

[12] *GC 32,* dec. 11, ¶218, ¶238.

[13] *Documents of the Thirty-Third General Congregation of the Society of Jesus,* ed. Donald R. Campion, S.J., and Albert C. Louapre, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1984), pt. 1, "Life in the Spirit," pp. 46f. These ideas are further developed in pt. 2, "Sent into Today's World," p. 59.

of my actions, in the same way as has been explained in the Particular Examen.

The fourth is to ask pardon of our Lord God for my faults.

The fifth is, with His grace to purpose amendment. Pater Noster.[14]

The Examen Booklet and Beads

From the twenties well into the fifties, a new novice promptly received an examen booklet and instruction on how to fight against particular sins and faults. The pocket-sized leaflet gave a page for each week and, on each page, seven pairs of lines representing each day's noon and night examens. This was copied, of course, from the "Daily Particular Examen of Conscience" in *Spiritual Exercises,* [31], which directed the exercitant to put a mark on the line at noon and at night for each failing act. Once he donned a cassock, the novice was given a set of examen beads to hang inside it over his chest, a kind of one-line abacus. With these tools he was ready to keep account of the times he fell into sin or fault.

Right through the first six decades of this century, novice masters taught the bare-bones five-point examen of conscience from *Spiritual Exercises,* [43]. As Peter McDonough points out in *Men Astutely Trained,* "[t]he methods of training," "used by the Jesuits in the nineteen thirties, the forties and through most of the fifties were almost exactly the same as the procedures that had been set in place in the previous century."[15] Tertian instructors reinforced that training.

Common life did, too, from time out of mind well into the sixties. "Fifteen minutes before the noon meal," as John Padberg wrote, "a bell rang to remind everyone of the time to be spent in the personal examination of conscience." The same bell rang again in the evening.[16] We heard that bell even when we were sick. Father General Wlodimir Ledóchowski taught in 1943 that "St. Ignatius did not hesitate to dispense the sick from meditation, but hardly ever dispensed anyone from his examination of conscience."[17] The community

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[14] Ignatius of Loyola, *The Text of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius,* trans. John Morris (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1923), 18. This is paragraph [43]. Hereafter, parts of *Spiritual Exercises* will be cited by these standard paragraph numbers, in many editions printed in the margin within brackets ([]).

[15] Peter McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained: A History of the Jesuits in the American Century* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), 167.

[16] "How We Live Where We Live," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 20, no. 2 (March 1988): 8, 13.

[17] *Selected Writings of Father Ledóchowski,* ed. Austin G. Schmidt, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1945), 415.

minister at Grand Coteau in 1950 instructed a dozen young Jesuit Asian-flu victims bedded down in a classroom that they were dispensed from their meditation but they were to make their examen. Through fevered haze and flux, I impiously wondered what about.

That point about St. Ignatius's practice troubled our collective memory. We discovered in the fifties and sixties, through Joseph de Guibert's *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice,* that our holy founder's practice was not myth but historical fact: Laínez had testified that Ignatius observed throughout his life the daily practice that he recommended in *Spiritual Exercises* of comparing today with yesterday, this week with last week, and this month with last month. Pedro Ribadeneira had asserted that Ignatius examined himself hourly all of his life.[18] What could so perfect a man have been doing? We thought we knew, of course: He was demanding an account of himself, in general and in particular, according to the five bare points he had laid out in *Spiritual Exercises.*

The Definitive, Five-Point Form

"Many saints and founders" had promoted the examen, Father James Clare observed in 1924, "but St. Ignatius was the first who reduced it into form, and laid down rules which render it practical and really efficient."[19] The word "efficient" carried rich connotations during the twenties: scientific (already in Clare's title), realistic, effective, productive, au courant, and more. The five-point form had become nearly an archetype. McMenamy instructed eighty Jesuits at Keyser Island, Connecticut, in 1939 that "no particular manner of making the general examen is prescribed," but taught that the five-point examination of conscience was "recommended." He meant more than he said: carefully detailed in all other important matters, he found no reason to offer further suggestions on making the examen.[20]

August Coemans did. In his *Commentary on the Rules of the Society of Jesus,* which novices began studying in 1942, Coemans suggested that, in an exercise made twice a day every day, "some suitable variety may be found beneficial—hardly an overstatement. The variety, however, was to be introduced into each and every one of the five points: "in recalling God's benefits in the

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[18] Joseph de Guibert, S.J., *The Jesuits, Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice: A Historical Study,* trans. William J. Young, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1964), 39, 66. The study appeared originally in French in 1953.

[19] Clare, *The Science of Spiritual Life,* 31.

[20] Francis Xavier McMenamy, S.J., *Eight-Day Retreat, Based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius,* ed. William J. Grace, S.J. (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1956), 42.

first point, in the motives of contrition and amendment in the third and fourth points, in the examination itself in the third point."[21]

By the Roaring Twenties, when the flood of immigrants ended and the oldest Jesuits living today began entering the Company, the five-point examination of conscience was not merely one way of self-examination. It *was* self-examination.

The End of the Accountant's Examen

Anecdotal evidence indicates, however, that the exercise had begun to pose problems even before the Second World War. An established scholar who entered in the twenties feels that by the end of his regency in 1934 most Jesuits of his entering class had more or less given up the accountant's examen. A Jesuit psychologist who entered in 1931 spontaneously connects it with Emile Coué's fatuous optimism that "every day in every way I get better and better."

Writers in positions that gave them information about many Jesuits also felt those problems. Judging in 1936 from long experience, Joseph Rickaby considered the examination of conscience "a practice extremely difficult to keep up."[22] A decade later, in 1946, Richard Rooney summarized current opinion: Not only is the examination of conscience "not our most beloved exercise," but "as a matter of experienced fact, it is a distasteful difficulty."[23]

The evidence mounts. Some who entered in the late forties or early fifties, I can testify from personal experience, felt the ground give way under the five-point examination of conscience even before the end of the juniorate. We felt as Southern educators felt when in 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* yanked the separate-but-equal grounds from under neatly segregated schools. For a full generation, the distaste wore us down; George Aschenbrenner would begin his article in 1971 with this flat assertion: "Examen is usually the first practice to disappear from the daily life of the religious."[24]

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[21] August Coemans, S.J., *Commentary on the Rules of the Society of Jesus,* trans. Matthew Germing, S.J. (El Paso, Texas: Revista Católica Press, 1942), 100.

[22] Joseph Rickaby, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola: Spanish and English with a Continuous Commentary,* 2nd ed. (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1936), 55. No peep of contradiction came from American Jesuits for whom the Englishman's bilingual book was a vade mecum.

[23] Richard L. Rooney, S.J., "New Vitality for the Old Examen," *Review for Religious* 5 (September 1946): 296.

[24] George Aschenbrenner, S.J., "Consciousness Examen," *Review for Religious 31 (January 1971):* 14.

The evidence we have, then, seems to suggest that some time between the Second World War and the end of the Second Vatican Council, say between 1945 and 1965, American Jesuits no longer found the five-point examination of conscience a viable form of self-examination before God. But since we thought of that prototypical form as self-examination itself, many if not most Jesuits were failing to make the examination of conscience at all. We were ashamed of that. But no matter how hard we tried, we did not find help in this exercise. The examination of conscience had become the Edsel among our spiritual vehicles.

When every single Edsel fell apart, we might have begun to wonder whether the problem were just the drivers. We did not. Our steady analysis was that our failure arose "first, from want of heart and care in the matter; secondly, from not finding a proper subject [for particular examination]; thirdly, from neglect to mark [the number of our failures on the lines in the booklet]."[25]

Even those who did not find Rickaby's analysis persuasive did not examine the presupposition that the accountant's examen was a perfectly adequate spiritual vehicle. Jesuits felt shame and still do. How did we let all that happen?

Devotional Catholicism and the Purgative Way

Saturday afternoon, December 6, 1941. Eleven-year-old Joey Tetlow fidgets in line on the boys' side of the confessional between Nash Barrecca and Buddy Robicheaux. Above his shoulder stands a pretty Sacred Heart dressed in gold-bordered crimson and cream, listening to the rosaries glide through the white gloves of the Altar Society. The ladies' hats incite the boys, particularly a blue birdnest and a lemon-meringue pie. Sunday is Men's Communion. All the boys have to get through the water torture of cleaning teeth without swallowing even a scruple of water. Joey confesses three of this and four of that and gets two Our Fathers and three Hail Marys. Outside, they gang up on Kiki O'Neill because he snickers that he got a rosary for looking at girls.

[25] Rickaby, *The Spiritual Exercises*, 55. The author thought that "marking (at least *once* a day) is to the particular examen what wearing is to the scapular."

Americans entering Jesuit novitiates from 1920 well on into the fifties had no problem taking up the examination of conscience. They had been doing it all their lives, fighting sin while God watched.

Their piety—historians are calling it devotional Catholicism—expressed itself in a grand array of externals: Mass on Sunday in full dress, miraculous medals around necks (you can always tell a Catholic), polychrome saints on bedroom walls, novenas and rosaries, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and holy days of obligation, indulgenced prayers and devotions like the nine First Fridays.[26] As boys, older Jesuits lived this in our parishes and carried it right into the Society.

By the twenties, to quote a now famous declaration by Catholic educators, American Catholicism was no longer just "a creed, a code, or a cult"; it had become a "culture."[27] As Martin Marty records it, at the end of the First World War "for the first time there was the *American* Catholic church."[28] The Society of Jesus had grown fully at home in that American Catholic culture and in the nation's, as well. As the twenties wore on, the nation's culture cut loose in a jazzy celebration and the Church's culture swung into what historian James Hennesey called "Catholicism Unbound."[29] Yet, in this roiling mix of cultures, the examination of conscience mattered a good deal. For by the twenties devotional Catholicism had focused into what an historian of American Catholic spirituality characterized as "the triumph of the purgative way."[30]

The Purgative Way

Catholic preachers did not, as a rule, expound a Protestant work ethic or an American success ethic. They described God's work in the world on the paradigm of sin and redemption; this had the great advantage of arming Catholics against sin and the rather notable disadvantage of placing human action first, as though our sin moved God finally to act. This seems to me one reason why American Jesuits have had difficulty adopting the paradigm—basic in Ignatian spirituality—of creation and salvation, which places God's work first, constantly and in everything. Some have not adopted it yet.

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[26] Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1985), 221–40.

[27] Ibid., 351.

[28] Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion,* vol. 1, *The Irony of It All, 1893–1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 179.

[29] James Hennesey, S.J., *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 234.

[30] Chinnici, *Living Stones*, 52.

The purgative way surely dominated in parish missions, during which "the preacher would hammer home the saving truths of Christianity, urging people to repent and do penance for their sins."[31] The preachers—Paulists, Jesuits, and Redemptorists were especially esteemed—did not typically address parishioners as though they were advanced in prayer and holiness. Typically they proclaimed the mission a time when "God calls with a more earnest voice than at other times all persons, but sinners especially. . . . when priests from early morning till night wait in the confessionals for you, to absolve you from your sins, and restore you to God's favor."[32]

However grim it sounds today, this purgative way engendered no meanness of spirit. Certainly, Catholics heard a good deal about the penalties due to sin and how to get indulgences for them. But as historian Philip Gleason pointed out, they heard about all of it as part of a brave call to personal sanctification based on a solid theological foundation. "Knowing what they believed, having confidence in the truth of those beliefs, and seeing an intimate connection between their faith and the Church with her treasury of grace, Catholics could throw themselves with loving abandon into the search for personal holiness."[33]

They exercised that loving abandon—which novices brought with them into the novitiate—first of all upon the Holy Eucharist. Externally, Catholics produced grand Eucharistic congresses, beginning with an extravaganza in Chicago in 1926 to which nine cardinals and a pride of bishops had traveled from New York in a special cardinal red train.[34] In these and other Eucharistic celebrations, Catholics could show their strength and unity without provoking nativist retaliation.

Internally, however, even the Eucharist was incorporated into the battle against sin. Every Sunday, in just about every parish, confessions were heard during Mass up to Communion time and commonly enough even after it. Other churches and denominations had Communion. Confession was the Catholic thing. The practice both shaped and expressed what Jay Dolan calls devotional Catholicism's four "central traits: authority, sin, ritual, and the miraculous."[35] And confession gave quintessential expression to the purgative way.

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[31] Jay P. Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830–1900* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), xvi.

[32] From the Paulists' archives, cited in Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism,* 58.

[33] Philip Gleason, *Keeping the Faith: American Catholicism Past and Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 170.

[34] Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion,* vol. 2, *The Noise of Conflict, 1919–1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 145–47.

[35] Dolan, *American Catholic Experience,* 221.

Jesuit Spirituality in America

Novices who brought devotional Catholicism with them into the Society found a Jesuit piety that matched it. The American *Liber Devotionum,* for instance, given to young Jesuits from the time it was printed in 1933, thoroughly integrated devotional Catholicism and Jesuit piety. The book kept the same format as ordinary prayer books for the Catholic faithful, and its purpose was the same—to present devotions to the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Name, the Sacred Heart, St. Joseph, the Holy Angels, St. Ignatius; to provide prayers for a happy death, the way of the cross, grace at meals. And always, the examen of conscience.

In older books of prayer, which had been modeled on European counterparts, the examination of conscience had presented long lists of sins and failings to check through. But in newer ones and in the *Liber Devotionum,* the formula stayed on a high theological plane. In the first point, for instance, Jesuits were to thank God for "all the benefits Thou has conferred on angels" as well as men, and in the fourth point, on contrition, we were to weep with the Magdalene over having refused to give God "the glory that I owed Thee by so many titles." The *Liber,* however, did not stay with heady abstractions but elicited the same affective devotions recommended to all the faithful by books like James McElhone's *Particular Examen,* published in 1952.[36] Paralleling McElhone, each of the *Liber*'s five points ended, with necessary adjustments, this way:

> Divine Heart of Jesus, deign to present my gratitude to Thy Heavenly Father.
> Loving Heart of Mary, be my salvation.
> My Jesus, have mercy.
> Kiss the wound of the right hand.[37]

This congruence of pieties made it easy for young American Catholics early in the century to swing right into Jesuit piety.

For Jesuit piety itself had been enlisted in the Church's brave fight against modern sin. Regularly at renovation times, young Jesuits heard the long letter of Father General Luis Martín, the "special object" of which was to "lay bare the snares which the foul enemy of the human race has prepared against you" and "to offer you some helps which may the better enable you to ward off these dangers."[38] They heard the examination of conscience, in particular, tightly focused on sin. They read in Coemans, for instance, that reflection on ourselves

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[36] James F. McElhone, C.S.C., *Particular Examen,* new ed. rev. (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1952).

[37] *Liber Devotionum,* 3rd ed. rev. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1933), 391–98.

[38] Father General Luis Martín, S.J., "On Some Dangers of Our Times," in *Renovation Reading,* rev. ed. enlarged (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College, 1931), 123.

was good, but "the principal thing is to excite a deep detestation and sorrow for any, even the slightest, transgression of the divine will, and to conceive a firm resolution of amendment."[39]

This is the rhetoric of the purgative way, enthusiastically applied to the examination of conscience. "What the brush and broom are in housekeeping, the pruning-knife in gardening, *the balancing of accounts in book-keeping,* the examination of conscience is in the spiritual life, for by it are to be regulated all the other spiritual exercises."[40] By the twenties, American Jesuits were practicing this "accountant's examen."[41]

Objective Sin and Law

Jesuits used this accountant's examen because, as they worked with the appreciation of sin and of God current in the twenties, it served them well.

From the twenties and far into the century, sin had to do with law. The American Catholic mind-set on sin, in Robert Harvanek's judgment, was emphatically "legalistic" and sin was defined with little further fuss as "a violation of law."[42] George Ganss reflected in 1977 that he had been taught sixty years earlier to appreciate sin "as a deliberate transgression by a responsible person of a law of God after he knew it was wrong or forbidden by God."[43] No trouble counting sins, either: each sinful act had a name and a category, "each and every class of sin, be it mortal or venial."[44]

The paradigmatic sin was an external act, easy to name. Some commandment or law covered each act; and every man knew, or ought to know, that commandment or that law (there was extensive casuistry on culpable ignorance). With these emphases on the act and the law, a man's most intimate sin was real only when it was "objective." Sin was a pervasive and powerful objective presence.

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[39] Coemans, *Commentary,* 100.

[40] Maurice Meschler, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius,* 2nd ed. (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College, 1899), 32. Italics added. Meschler for decades was a widely and much-used authority.

[41] "The merchant daily balances his accounts; he compares his receipts and his expenses; he corrects his errors" (Antoine Giroux, S.J., *A Retreat for Priests,* trans. Edgar J. Bernard, S.J. [El Paso: Revista Católica Press, 1947], Consideration 42, p. 1).

[42] Robert F.Harvanek, S.J., "The Reluctance to Admit Sin," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 9, no. 3 (May 1977): 155.

[43] Ibid., 152. Ganss attended a Jesuit high school from 1920 to 1924.

[44] McMenamy, *Eight-Day Retreat,* 44.

Furthermore, mortal sin abounded. A deliberate mouthful of meat on Friday, an overeager notion about sex, a careless disregard of Mass rubrics, and a man had put his soul in mortal danger. Catholics, in Garrison Keillor's gentle twitting, all belonged to the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Responsibility. Catholics believed it quite easy to sin mortally and feared the ease almost more than the sin. Certainly, a Catholic could swing between the states of grace and sin like a door on a Dodge City saloon. Their belief suggests a good deal about what sin really meant: It was objective, a kind of extrinsic denomination rather than an intrinsic reordering of the whole person; more like bad manners than a character flaw. Only in the mid sixties would Catholics begin listening to Josef Fuchs's reflections on the fundamental option, the deep ordering of the person toward or away from God that could be shaped only slowly and through many actions.

The Accountant's Examen and the Sacrament

In this fertile atmosphere of legalistic, objective, and relatively easily committed mortal sin (which calls for a longer and sharper analysis than it is getting here), almost inexorably the Church connected the examination of conscience with the sacrament of confession. The preconciliar Church—world-wide, not only in America—needed the stress on examination and confession, for mortal sin abounded.

Devotional Catholicism connected the examination of conscience with confession as a pastoral matter. That predisposed American Jesuits to make the connection in the Society. They did that easily, as the accountant's examen made exact preparation for confession. No surprise that confessions were scheduled during the periods assigned for the examination of conscience.

But the connection was not merely cultural or pragmatic. All Jesuits heard this in the monthly reading of the "Summary of the Constitutions":

> All must daily make the usual examination of conscience. If they be not Priests, they must confess, and receive the most blessed Sacrament of the Altar, every eighth day. And there must be one Confessor for all, appointed by the Superior; but if this cannot be, every one must have his own fixed Confessor, to whom his conscience must be wholly open.[45]

Jesuits did not have to rely on inference, however; they heard the examination of conscience and confession explicitly connected on more than one occasion. Father General Ledóchowski, for instance, remarked in a seminal letter that,

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[45] *Rules of the Society of Jesus* (Roehampton: House of Probation of the English Province, 1863), 3. Men went weekly "if they be not Priests" because priests were urged to even more frequent confession. See "Regulæ sacerdotum," in *Regulæ Societatis Iesu,* editio maior (Rome: Generalate of the Society of Jesus, 1963), 39.

having discussed the daily examination of conscience, "I shall, in my opinion, have done ample justice to sacramental confession."[46] Timothy Brosnahan, a spiritual guide on the East Coast before the Second World War, taught that "two sacraments play a most important part" in our spiritual life, penance and the Holy Eucharist. Two religious exercises correspond to these: examination of conscience and meditation. "The examination of conscience, therefore, may be called our daily Penance."[47]

From Objective to Subjective in Sin

The problem back then—we find this hard to grasp now—was to find the subjective correlative, the interiority of sin. This tremendous change, from objectivity to subjectivity, demands full study on its own; but it has to be noted here at least, since it figures large in the way Jesuits could and can make the examination of conscience.

Joseph Rickaby believed by the mid thirties that Jesuits easily passed "judgment upon ourselves . . . when action or word is involved," but "there is a difficulty . . . in making the particular examen upon interior faults."[48] Gerald Kelly, surveying the American scene shortly after World War II, perceived this problem among all religious. He considered it necessary to lay out in 1947 a basic catechism on sin—formal and material, mortal and venial, and so forth. However, though he used objective language, he was not concerned to teach the "objective" moral law. He was concerned to lead religious to a subjective experience of guilt. His title: "Subjective Sin."[49]

Catholics understood "objective" sin; but as depth psychology grew more democratized and the common folk began to get an inkling about its insights, Catholics began having trouble with the interior experience of guilt and shame. Hence, Rickaby and Kelly were sensing the early strains that Catholics felt as they began thinking of sin as utterly interior. They turned slowly; even during the fifties, Catholics were instructed by thinkers like Bishop Fulton Sheen to consider Freudian insights grossly erroneous.

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[46] "On the Proper Performance of the Daily Exercises of Piety," in *Selected Writings of Father Ledóchowski,* ed. Austin G. Schmidt, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1945), 393–423, 415.

[47] Timothy Brosnahan, S.J., "Some Notes on the Particular Examen," *Review for Religious* 2 (January 1943): 85.

[48] Rickaby, *The Spiritual Exercises,* 55. The objective, impersonal language ("There is a difficulty") illustrates the inability of Rickaby and his time to say simply "We have an interior problem." We suffer the opposite inability today.

[49] Gerald Kelly, S.J., "Subjective Sin," *Review for Religious* 6 (March 1947): 114–20.

Nonetheless, before very long sin would seem *merely* subjective. Moralists who once listed sins with exhaustive thoroughness would be hard-pressed to identify any concrete act as definitely a grave sin. A generation after Kelly wrote, his title would sound redundant. By Aschenbrenner's time, if it was sin, it was subjective. But in the late forties, Kelly's title had rung faintly oxymoronic, and his article gives strong evidence of how difficult it was to turn inward to the subjective sin and away from "objective" sin as a kind of extrinsic denomination.

That turn coincided with the post–World War II phase of American individualism, and with it contributed to the emasculation of the accountant's examen. Jesuits continued to make the examination of conscience and all kept making it at the same time. But by the fifties, as we pulled away from the public reading of individuals' faults at renewal time and dropped self-accusation of failings in the dining room, we were feeling alone in the examination of conscience. That loneliness was sure to come because, as Robert Harvanek later noted, "this approach to sin is also almost inevitably individualistic."[50]

The Image of God

Devotional Catholicism's emphasis on objective sin and confession implicated a characteristic image of God that surely supported the accountant's examen. David Fleming put it forcefully and succinctly: "A strong image following upon the Council of Trent up to pre–Vatican II times was God as the divine bookkeeper and stern judge."[51] Furthermore, our theological precision meant that we were offending directly against laws and only through them against God's Self. We heard instructors like the influential Francis X. McMenamy explain venial sin as "an insult offered to God's attributes, to His power, His wisdom, and His holiness."[52]

Here is the first mention of love for God in McMenamy's six pages about purity of heart: "Venial sin breaks down the soul's normal defense, which is personal love of God."[53] Do not miss the grammar: God's love in a subordinate clause. Sin itself was the main clause. Do not miss the spirituality: A man's love of God is an instrument for his soul's defense rather more than his soul's life; a man's love of God fits into his mortal battle against sin, and not vice versa.

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[50] Harvanek, "Reluctance to Admit Sin," 155.

[51] David L. Fleming, S.J., "Finding a Busy God," in *A Spirituality for Contemporary Life,* ed. David L. Fleming, S.J. (St. Louis: Review for Religious, 1991), 21f.

[52] McMenamy, *Eight-Day Retreat,* 44.

[53] Ibid., 45.

Jesuits were, without doubt, explicitly aware that sin offends God's love. "O, my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee," we prayed in the Act of Contrition. However, as our acts of contrition brought our attention directly back to our own actions—"I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen"—so we conceived of God's love in terms of God's action: as divine providence and divine governance, rather than as God's self, though of course we entertained the theological concept that "God is love." We believed that we shared in God's love not by the divine indwelling Spirit as much as by "a certain participation in His own divine nature, which we call sanctifying grace."[54] The problem was that we reified this "participation" called "sanctifying grace" and quantified it, gauging that we could earn more or less of it, which surely could not be thought true of the infinite love that God has (is) for us.

This participation meant getting our piece of the holy treasury of the Church. It was a kind of accountancy. And the image of God it implied, God the Bookkeeper, is one of the things older Jesuits meant when they complained during the middle third of this century that formation did little to introduce a loving, caring God.

In the twenties, thirties, and forties, the God whom American Catholics worshipped was the omnipotent, transcendent Other, *mysterium tremendum et fascinans.* Other American Christians may already have lost the "innocence" of this appreciation of God; but Catholics, "confident of their ability to answer the big questions concerning God, the universe, man, and society," showed they still felt awe and reverence by kneeling in mud on the battlefields of the forties and in pews at Sunday afternoon benedictions right through the fifties.[55] The Creator had acted personally on the world in the beginning of time and would come again in person in the end time; in the meantime, he governed "from eternity."[56]

In this light, the accountant's examen had power and clear meaning. For under this God, Jesuits still felt the benevolence of authority and particularly of the divine law and order. We felt that by obeying the Commandments and the Constitutions, we were pleasing God and attaining man's final end. Men felt honored and privileged to be commanded and effective in building the Kingdom. We were devoted in a manly way, no mush, to the Lady Mary.

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[54] John M. Thill, *God's Friendship: Selections from the Meditations of the Venerable Servant of God Luis de la Puente, S.J.,* trans. and supplemented (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1951), 206. Thill speaks here in his own name.

[55] William Halsey, *The Survival of American Innocence* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 17.

[56] Peter Schoonenberg, S.J., *God's World in the Making* (Pittsburgh, Penn.: Duquesne University Press, 1964), 28.

Younger men eagerly joined us in considerable numbers. We had reached "a kind of maturity in the system" that gave our lives meaning and a sense of purpose and mission, since "there was still a great deal to be done in the Catholic subculture."[57]

Jesuit spirit earlier on was not supernatural without any alloy, however. We were American males who wore military burr haircuts and confided government to a soldier ("I Like Ike"). Right through the Second World War, the American male felt deeply stirred by marching songs like Sigmund Romberg's:

> Give me some men who are stout-hearted men
> Who will fight for the right they adore.
> . . . . . .
> And I'll soon give you ten thousand more!

Indeed, in the fifties, Jesuits built scholasticates as though we expected ten thousand more. But in the long run, World War II was to have a corrosive impact on masculine self-appreciation and a distinctly negative impact on vocations.[58] I have more to say about this self-appreciation—hardly irrelevant to self-examination—in the later section on the energies of the Warrior and of the King.

God and American Nominalism

Devotional Catholicism was not by any measure all image and emotion. It was in fact an extraordinarily certain and confident creed, not untinged by rationalism. Perhaps more than the run of American Catholics, we Jesuits appreciated reason and put faith in it. We were taught and appear to have accepted an image of an Unmoved Mover in whom, philosophically, there inhered no real relations with us creatures. This image favored more than somewhat the rationalists' God the Watchmaker. Other American theologians had begun the process of altering the image at the turn of the century: Holy Cross priest John A. Zahm, for instance, had begun noting God's work within creation in *Evolution and Dogma,* published in 1896. Paulist Walter Elliott had leaned toward Isaac Hecker's transcendentalist vision of a divine immanence in his *Life of Christ,* published in 1901.

Not American Jesuits. Determined *nova non docere* (to teach nothing new), they had not joined the effort to accommodate neo-Scholasticism to

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[57] McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), 157.

[58] Dennis Castillo, "The Origin of the Priest Shortage, 1942–62," *America* 167, no. 12 (October 24, 1992): 302–4.

modern science and modern aesthetics.[59] They remained signally faithful to papal teaching before and after the condemnations of Americanism in 1899 and of Modernism in 1907 and 1912. In consequence of this, Jesuits from the twenties right through the forties kept to pretested channels of Scholasticism in philosophy and theology and clung to the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans,* setting none of it aside when they turned to examine their sins and failings.

There were notable exceptions, mainly among men in social work and theory. John Delaney of the Xavier Labor School in New York City begged pastors to preach, "not God, a policeman with a big stick, not God majestic, immense, Creator of heaven and earth, far-off, untouchable, but the God that Christ revealed, Our Father."[60] This new image of God proved so powerful that it helped launch the Christian Family Movement and the Cana Conferences. But those movements reached an elite minority; for all other American Catholics, the majestic, immense, untouchable, far-off accountant—God held the field unrivaled.

Consequently, American Jesuits joined and even led the majority of Catholics in scorning the vaguely immanent God of American transcendentalism. They also rejected romantic medievalism as "poetic, vaguely idealistic, intuitive, impressionistic, undisciplined, and subjective." Rather, pressed on another side by the neoorthodox theologians, they embraced, preached, and taught Scholastic medievalism, "technical, bluntly realistic, discursive, precise, systematic, and objective."[61] They embraced what more than one authority has called the near-mystical absolutes of neo-Thomism and fell victim to what Donald Gelpi in 1966 would name "nominalism": "the rigid substitution of one possible conceptualization of reality for the reality itself."[62]

Consequently, what was immediate to all of us, "the more rational pillars of the Church," was our idea of God's Will and our image of Divine Providence, a scrim of interwoven mandates, reasons, causes, laws, and convictions between us and the Living God.[63] Right through the fifties, when we took advantage of the assigned time to make our examination of conscience, we made it in front of this scrim.

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[59] McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 154. The phrase was a vaunt of Camillo Mazzella's while teaching at Woodstock before the turn of the century.

[60] John Delaney, S.J., "Retreats for Workingmen," Service Bulletin, December 1941 (St. Louis: Institute of Social Order). Cited in McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 115.

[61] Philip Gleason, *Keeping the Faith: American Catholicism Past and Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1987), 23f.

[62] Donald L. Gelpi, S.J., *Functional Asceticism: A Guideline for American Religious* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), 8.

[63] McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* xii.

By the time the United States elected John F. Kennedy and the Church elected Pope John XXIII, it didn't seem to matter a lot. The examination of conscience had become a pious exercise from another age, performed in the presence of a God who as a judge had somehow grown vague, and connected with the legalistic battle against catalogues of sins that felt less and less threatening.

From American Catholics to Catholic Americans

The muggy June of 1960. New Orleans at noon. Newly ordained Joe Tetlow leans over the massive, cool, Carrara marble altar at Most Holy Name of Jesus Church. He whispers the Latin words of consecration alone; they fade in the awe and reverence of the sweeping Gothic sanctuary. He holds his genuflection for a long while, listening to his heart thrum. He does not, however, connect the rubrics with sin. He does not feel anxious over leaving crumbs.

Several well-known lines of change matured among Catholic Americans during the affluent fifties and the turbulent sixties that definitively affected their experience of God, sin, and Church. By the end of these decades, Catholics had completed the shift out of the devotional Catholicism appropriate to immigrant Catholics to a postconciliar, enculturated spirituality appropriate to Catholic Americans.

That shift had been given a strong impulse by three of Pope Pius XII's great encyclicals. *Divino afflante Spiritu* had appeared in 1943, as the Second World War had started going better with the invasions of Sicily and New Guinea. American Catholics, adapting to a culture much wedded to the Bible, were glad to turn to the Scriptures. They found there a different God from the philosophical theologians'. Scholars like Bruce Vawter (*A Popular Explanation of the Four Gospels,* 1955) and John L. McKenzie (*The Two-Edged Sword,* 1956) presently turned deep scholarship into a source of vibrant spirituality.

In *Mystici Corporis,* also 1943, Catholics found a living communion transcending their workaday parish. What they found speeded the epochal change in their perception of the Church, away from juridical membership in a "perfect society" to membership in a community that was a living body, the People of God with Christ as Head. Finally, Catholics were invited in 1947 to a renewed liturgy by *Mediator Dei.* Scholars like Virgil Michel and Gerald Ellard found in the encyclical a vindication of their work to reintegrate worship into

the whole of Catholic life, including its necessary social concerns. In *Orate Fratres,* which Ellard had helped to launch while he was still a scholastic, they were helping inaugurate the age of the laity.

While Catholics were taking these fresh spiritual approaches, they were also enlarging their secular intellectual development. Tens of thousands of Catholics took advantage of the GI Bill to attend secular colleges and universities, no longer branded dangerous as Catholic institutions' temporary Quonset huts could not handle the huge influx. Catholics were taking full account of depth psychology: testing of postulants began in the sixties, not without debate. Freud, they had slowly realized, may have been badly mistaken about God and the psyche; he was not entirely wrong about men. They were also accepting evolutionary theory, even against official hesitations. Darwin, who may have been mistaken about God in eternity, was not mistaken about creation in time.

Catholics were moving out of the ghetto not only intellectually but physically as well. The Second World War had left the United States producing half of all the world's manufactured goods, a phenomenal base for national prosperity and international economic hegemony. The Eisenhower years spread that prosperity—American wealth has never before or since been as evenly distributed—and Catholics, for whom "an expanding economy was opening up numerous opportunities in business and professional life," got a large share in it.[64] They also shared the nation's "many-faceted revival of religion" during the years following the war, and in this "heady period of affluence and revival" Catholics flourished and increased disproportionately in almost every way.[65]

In the course of those affluent years, in 1955, John Tracy Ellis, Thomas O'Dea, and others sharpened the critical self-questioning of American Catholics that threw windows and doors open in the Catholic ghetto—just then physically melting into the suburbs. Some of the self-criticism was dampened by the Kennedy years, a defining moment in American Catholic life, and by Vatican II, an equally defining moment in the Church. As things turned out, these moments were just pauses.

A Postconciliar God

Catholics began growing impatient with a Christology too much from above and began finding a personal relationship with Jesus of Nazareth, encouraged by the Catholic charismatics after 1968. In the postconciliar whirlwind, Catholics found reading the Gospels a peak experience and moved

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[64] David O'Brien, *Public Catholicism* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 202.

[65] Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 396.

the Bible to the center of prayer and preaching. They found set forth in Teilhard de Chardin—*Le phénomène humain* appeared in 1955 and *Le milieu divin* in 1958, followed by translations in the sixties—a world-affirming God in Christ. They also found in him a thinker with the scope of an Aquinas who boldly synthesized theology and science. American Catholics received Teilhard's writings as though they were freshly discovered letters of the apostle Paul.

Catholics came to think of God himself as erupting into murky human history, an immanent God doing the work of ongoing creation from within its evolving energies. This meant displacing the image of God dwelling in eternity "above," as though eternity were almost spatially apart from time "here below." It meant espousing a God engaged with his people, constantly interacting, a "busy God," as Fleming's precise title put it. In the examination of conscience, Jesuits began meeting this different God.

By the time Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin took one giant step on the moon in 1969, we could no longer believe that the God of the Covenant held aloof from human history, utterly apart from it and acting on it from outside. We simply did not relate with God the irresistible One who makes us know his will for this and against that, who had definitively fixed the ages of human development and the stages of each man's holiness before time began. "It is our personal relationship with the Lord that we are concerned with," John English would write in a few years, "rather than the higher or lower degree of perfection that we reach."[66]

Relationships became central: plagued by assassinations of heroes like Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, by explosive violence between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, and by the confounding civil conflicts of the Vietnam war, Catholic Americans' consciences grew more tender about human and divine relationships. Seizing this new sense of personal relatedness that marked the Great Society, Jesuits proclaimed in homilies and in the Exercises the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation. God wishes only our good and, with an infinite, prevenient mercy, forgives us even while we are sinning. God is God-with-us, the perfect Friend, tender and compassionate, and—eventually, as it has turned out—rather motherly.[67]

God the stern Judge and Sin Counter faded from all but a few examinations of conscience and from confession. Officially, confession became the sacrament of reconciliation. Unofficially, American Catholics dropped it as

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[66] John J. English, S.J., *Spiritual Freedom* (Guelph, Ontario: Loyola House, 1987), 23.

[67] This development had its down side. It has obscured the Holy and Just One who cannot abide our sin. We cannot ignore that. See Mary and Leon Podles, "The Emasculation of God," *America* 161, no. 16 (November 25, 1989): 372–74.

quickly as they dropped fish on Friday. As did other American Catholics, Jesuits stopped confessing weekly, and some stopped almost entirely. It seems hardly credible that Jesuits would not have gone through a parallel development in the examination of conscience, which Jesuits appear to have been using less and less—if, indeed, they used it at all—during the sixties.

This change in American Catholicism resonated within the Company's life. As the sixties ended, Jesuits made an extraordinary historical recovery of our roots that profoundly affected the way we examine ourselves. We began directing one another one-on-one through the Spiritual Exercises. We led one another to a deepening of prayer which was also a democratization of mysticism. We went beyond consideration of the mysteries of Christ's life and meditation on its scenes. Very many of us, at least, entered into experiencing God immediately in contemplation.

We had not been prepared by devotional Catholicism for this change and needed help to break out of its mold. Directors promptly learned that just about every Jesuit needed "preparation days," days spent "accepting God's acceptance" of our actual selves. We prayed over texts like Psalm 139, "Oh, God, you know me and you probe me"; and Isaiah 43, "You are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you." During the late sixties and early seventies, every director heard Jesuits of all ages profess something like this, often with tears in their eyes: "I never knew that God truly loves me as I am." This was an extraordinary discovery and admission. It impacted the examination of conscience definitively.

Personal Sin, Law, and Social Ills

When we tried during the sixties to make the examination, we were no longer standing before a strict Judge as accused men; instead, as hurting men, we were accepting the care of a loving Savior. We could no longer dread dire punishment for acts that proved our worthlessness; in fact, we could no longer manage to classify and count sins. It did not seem feasible because the metaphor for sin—a mystery to be understood by analogy—had long since moved away from quantifiable law to health, only qualifiable. Sin had been lawlessness; sin now was sickness. And in God, we read in an enormously popular book, "lies our health and salvation; in His nearness is healing for body and soul."[68]

Note in passing that the sin-as-sickness metaphor was hardly new; it went back to Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa. However, the sickness earlier Christians imagined was physical sickness such as leprosy or cancer. When we turned again to think of sin as sickness, we began imagining mental or psychic

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[68] Josef Goldbrunner, *Holiness Is Wholeness,* trans. Stanley Goodman (New York: Pantheon, 1955), 13.

sickness—sin as compulsion or insanity. The gruff image behind "He's really sick," said of a serial killer, was not psoriasis but schizophrenia.

Here rose a problem that has proved intractable for us: When we picture sin as mental illness, we envision a deep psychological force that defies our free control. How can we be guilty of what lies outside our free control? Here in part is what ever happened to sin.

Our self-examination, then, shifted definitively from an account of broken laws and resolutions to an introspection of our human and divine relations. George Aschenbrenner could announce in 1971 what all Jesuits had come to see: In the accountant's examen, "the prime concern [had been] with what good or bad actions we had done each day," and the exercise had come to have "narrow moralistic overtones."[69] This had suited Scholasticism's analysis by objective and the immigrant church's purgative-way piety. It did not suit the new need to focus directly on personal initiatives and responses in relationships in a time of steadily encroaching individualism and subjectivism.

For by the end of the sixties, individualism and subjectivism had gone beyond eroding the "objectivity" of sin and had begun to force each of us to develop a personal method, as Avery Dulles observed in 1968. Each Jesuit was not only struggling with single conscience decisions but "anxiously groping for a method and a logic" that would help find what was "right for him as a particular person in a particular and rapidly changing situation."[70] Jesuits were struggling toward "discernment," but the concern with "situation" waved red flags back then. Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* had appeared in 1966. The situation-ethics debate proved particularly unnerving for Jesuits as it simultaneously sharpened our sense that the "old ethics" was somehow already failing us and that we had not yet discovered the "new ethics" that we could trust as faithfully orthodox. It also left us floundering in our understanding of sin.

The Sense of Sin

As the fifties progressed, Catholics had begun to lose the meaningfulness of the objective, architectonic theology, the kind they were relishing, for instance, in the television talks of Bishop Fulton Sheen. They had begun an inward turn to Thomas Merton's seven-storied contemplation, as they would continue to do in the sixties toward Anthony De Mello's fantasizing and Basil Pennington's centering prayer. While moving through this two-decade

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[69] Aschenbrenner, "Consciousness Examen," 14.

[70] Avery Dulles, S.J., quoted in Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., et al. in *Jesuit Spirit in a Time of Change* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1968), 10.

progression, they gradually found themselves laden with the full inward weight of sin. Some prophets knew that was coming: Merton's *Seeds of Contemplation* (1949) was bound in sackcloth.

The inwardness itself was the Christian moment in a broader evolution in Western consciousness, manifest in the turn inward of poetry, novels, and then films. Walter Ong argued convincingly that humankind has moved in stages to a "self-conscious, articulate, highly personal, interiority."[71] This was the evolution from the Ash Can School to abstract expressionism, from William Dean Howells's *My Mark Twain* to Eric Ericson's *The Young Man Luther.* Walter Ong traces this development over centuries, but it hit our self-examination in the early seventies like a balloon payment.

For a time, the examination of conscience threatened to transmute into just one more form of self-absorption, and we felt like traumatized summer soldiers licking our wounds. Henri Nouwen's *The Wounded Healer* (1979) was to become instantly a shibboleth that named this unruly inward experience. How could an action be simultaneously sincere and sinful? How could an attitude, a conviction, be both authentic and self-destructive? And in the end, how did moral self-examination differ from psychological self-analysis?

The inward turn of the American psyche during what Karen Horney identified as an age of anxiety came as Catholics grew more and more eagerly into American individualism and postmodern narcissism. The turn both gave rise to and also partly answered Karl Menninger's famous question, asked of all Christians in 1973, "What ever became of sin?" He feared that Americans had psychologized moral action and attitude so thoroughly that the word sin itself was "moribund" if not already dead.[72] However that might have been, as far as our examination of conscience was concerned, "sin" was beginning to feel like Confederate money on Wall Street.

Menninger, along with Rollo May, Karen Horney, Victor Frankl, Eric Fromm, brought us to a new interpretation of the small, intimate acts that we had once focused on in our examination of conscience: they no longer seemed like sin. How could we have been so concerned about "uncharitable remarks" when we were hardly relating to one another? How could we have become so self-absorbed in our search for "perfection" that—as more than one province congress declaimed—we ended up living like *hautes bourgeois* in the crenelated castles of our universities and high schools while not Rome but Detroit, Watts,

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[71] Walter Jackson Ong, S.J., *Orality and Literacy* (London: Methuen & Co., 1982; 7th printing, London: Routledge, 1988), 178.

[72] Karl Menninger, *What Ever Became of Sin?* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1973), 192.

and the nation's capital burned? And having come to this pass, how would we "find our authentic self" under obedience? and as celibates?

Our examination of conscience, if we were still making it, suffered during the seventies. We were trying to count sins, to put it starkly, that no longer really counted. We grew convinced of the idea—after *Gaudium et spes* (1965), the liberating theology of Medellín (1968), and "Justice in the World" (1971)—that any adequate concept of sin had to combine stereoptically a focus on the individual and a focus on the social. The Rome Synod of 1971 seemed instantly obvious: "According to the Christian message, man's relationship to his neighbor is bound up with his relationship to God; his response to the love of God, saving us through Christ, is shown to be effective in his love and service of men. Christian love of neighbor and justice cannot be seaprated."[73] But that is all we knew; we did not yet have the names of sin or how to keep account of it. "I was unloving" fizzled fast.

The rhetoric was stirring, the message numbing: Jesuits were required by the mid seventies—even by our own institute, as I will say presently—to start examining our consciences for the neologism "social sin." As American Catholics who had barely begun the task of finding our inward, subjective sin, few of us found it easy to turn again and adapt this new perspective on social sin. Nor did we find much help in American Catholicism. Catholics had not felt free after *Testem benevolentiæ* and *Lamentabile* to develop the social theories outlined by the most serious Americanists, Isaac Hecker, John Ireland, and John Keane.[74] As a consequence, the "Catholicism unbound" of the twenties had inherited no distinctively American Catholic body of social doctrine and no list of sins against that doctrine. For dense historical reasons, Catholic lay and clerical leaders had "tended instinctively to champion a laissez faire economic order," as Martin Marty put it. They had developed "an informal theology" by the end of the First World War, and with it they "supported competitive individualism as much as did the Social Darwinist Protestants who thought they themselves were Calvinist in making that choice."[75]

The fairly successful explorations like the American bishops' Program for Reconstruction of 1919 and the natural-law ethics of John Ryan during the twenties had been strained by pressure (internal and from Rome) to maintain an iridescent orthodoxy. Jesuits had met at West Baden in 1943 to find some consensus on social questions and had found instead that "Catholic social

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[73] Synod of Bishops, 1971, "Justice in the World," in *Justice in the Marketplace,* ed. David M. Byers (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1985), 255.

[74] O'Brien, *Public Catholicism,* 120–28.

[75] Marty, *The Irony of It,* 179.

doctrine now appeared to be an incomplete blueprint at best."[76] Their social convictions were polarized by loyalty to papal forms of social thought—*Quadragesimo anno* had appeared in 1931—and their practical conclusions were weakened by the fact that they did not have "much expertise in practice."[77]

By the fifties, when neo-Thomism might yet have laid the basis for an American Catholic social ethic, Jesuits and Catholics as a whole had begun dividing into camps on public issues. They dug into various positions in the incipient debate whether capitalism could be redeemed; they were divided by a surge in racial tensions and the persistence of poverty amid affluence, and by the antics of Senator Joe McCarthy, which split Jesuits as it split all Catholics. Divisions deepened during the sixties. We wrestled with the ethics of artificial birth control and artificial heart implants, debated the morality of atomic deterrence and the justification of flaring race riots, and gagged on the fallout of Vietnam "Blowin' in the Wind."

There we were in the seventies, instructed to examine ourselves for social sin. Could we be guilty of the socioeconomic poverty around us? How could we gauge our guilt of racism? Could we commit an act of consumerism? What was the shame in our world-class affluence? We had much to figure out.

One thing we did not have to figure out: The accountant's examen no longer offered any real help. The Thirty-Second Congregation, however, did offer real help, giving us a number of leads on self-examination in the unitive way.

The Thirty-Second Congregation

In the first days of December 1974, the Thirty-Second General Congregation began work. The congregation was pulled between two global mind-sets, two polar sets of hopes and fears. One mind-set looked for the interior renewal of the religious life of the Society of Jesus through the preservation and renewal of its institute. This one Pope Paul VI urged in ringing sentences.

> [W]hy then do you doubt? You have a spirituality strongly traced out, an unequivocal identity and a centuries-old confirmation which was based on the validity of methods, which, having passed through the crucible of history, still bear the imprint of the strong spirit of St. Ignatius.[78]

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[76] McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 169.

[77] Ibid., 170.

[78] "Address of Pope Paul VI to the Members of the 32nd General Congregation," in *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus,* ed. John W. Padberg, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977), 527.

Did the examination of conscience fit here or not? A valid method, a strong spirituality, bearing the five-pointed imprint of St. Ignatius and a centuries-old confirmation?

The other mind-set—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the other side of Jesuits' minds and hearts—looked toward an aggiornamento of the apostolic life of the Company through a more comprehensive obedience to the Church's lead in faith and justice.

Tugged by these poles, the members of the congregation made a searching, communal examination of conscience. In a certain sense, they made the congregation itself a communal examination of conscience. In giving this gift to the Company, they did not rake over faults and failures in dismay. In an evolution important to the examination of conscience, they simultaneously invited the Company out of the purgative way and led it into the unitive way.

"What is it to be a Jesuit?"[79] Not, as it had been for some decades, to be a man who keeps the rule and is kept by the rule. It is to be a sinner. Not one armed for an all-absorbing battle against personal sin. Rather, to be a Jesuit is to be a sinner who knows himself sinning, forgiven, and called to union with Christ in his labors. Not inward, self-absorbed action and not the labor for "perfection." No, these authentic sinners are to give themselves to full engagement "in the crucial struggle of our time: the struggle for faith and that struggle for justice which it includes."[80]

We engage in this struggle not singly but as a *companionship.* The congregation underscored this by making a significant change in Pope Paul VI's answer to his rhetorical question, "Who are you?" He declared, not for the first time, that "you are members of an *Order* that is religious, apostolic, priestly, and united with the Roman Pontiff by a special bond of love and service." The congregation quoted this statement verbatim, pronouncing it "the distinguishing mark of our Society." But it made a significant change: We are members of "a *companionship*" with those characteristics rather than of "an Order."[81]

The congregation consistently described and analyzed the Company precisely as a companionship in ways that qualify Jesuit prayer. We are to pray together, for one thing. We are to review all of our ministries together. We have to share our experiences with one another.

Moreover, the congregation urged that our way of life together has to be a model for a companionship with those to whom we are sent to minister. We have to learn solidarity with the poor and the marginated. We have to

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[79] GC 32, dec. 2, ¶11.

[80] CG32, dec. 2, ¶12.

[81] *GC 32,* p. 524, and dec. 2, ¶4. Italics added.

change our stance toward lay people who work in our institutions: they are co-workers now, collaborators—companions. The congregation elaborated an epochal change that is represented verbally by the switch from Order to companionship.

The congregation also—officially, anyhow—introduced epochal change into the examination of conscience: The exercise should sometimes be made together in common. It is to aim at assessing Jesuit apostolic contributions, both individual and corporate. It is preparation for the Ignatian process of discernment. After the Thirty-Second Congregation, the examination of conscience was no longer to be exclusively about narrowly personal sin; it had to be much broader. It had to be about the self in the Company and even in the world —about loyalty and about love.

This good news about our common examination did not hit American Jesuits at a favorable time. Between 1968 and 1974 all ten provinces had reshaped novitiate practices with startling liberty and most had dismantled the old juniorate. Tertians were finding it impossible to go to tertianship. The Jesuit Educational Association had fractured in 1969, leaving the Jesuit Secondary Education Association to fight for the apostolate in secondary education and the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities to find some mission beyond lobbying in Washington. The provincials were trying to explicate what they had launched in the Jesuit Conference. The conference, in turn, was trying to explain Project #1, the two-year action study of Jesuit commitments to education, 1973 to 1975. As we were all trying to figure out communal discernment, it seems as though few of us paid a lot of attention to the Thirty-Second Congregation's new departures in the examination of conscience.

Ending the Catholic Ghetto

Perhaps that's understandable. Any Jesuits who thought about the examination of conscience at all were trying to rethink it in the full riptide of the broad changes in Catholic life just detailed. Externally, the devotional Catholicism of the immigrant church had pretty well vanished by 1970, as altars were turned around, statues removed, and banks of candles uprooted. This period marks the maturing of American Catholicism, celebrated in magazines like *Jubilee* and *The Critic;* but it also marks the final erosion of the immigrant church's culture, cult, and code—and, many Catholics feared, even creed. Historian John Tracy Ellis saw the old Catholicism as a "shattered fixity" and felt discouraged at unrealistic expectations, the absence of inspired leadership, infidelity, and a seemingly complete absorption in American secularism.[82]

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[82] John Tracy Ellis, "American Catholicism, 1953—1979: A Notable Change," *Thought* 54 (1979), 120f.

It is hard to re-create the turmoil during the years on either side of 1974. They were summarized by the question blaring on the cover of *The National Review* in May of 1965, "What, in the name of God, is going on in the Catholic Church?" The prayer of the faithful often enough alternated between petitions for "the safety of our valiant youth dying for freedom" and for "the survival of innocent women and children being slaughtered in this unjust war." Some thought *Jesus Christ, Superstar* (1972) an epiphany and some, a blasphemy. Catholics did not know what to make of the "Jesus Movement" and bishops fretted about Catholic charismatics.

Jesuits were so deeply divided even over *Humanæ Vitæ* (1968) that we could hardly discuss it—as we could not discuss Vietnam, wearing ties, and formation. Community meetings, when we had them, were nerve-wracking and commonly deepened divisions. By the end of the seventies, we knew that Walter Ong had been correct to argue in *Frontiers in American Catholicism* that American Catholics had come to an "intellectual and spiritual crisis."[83]

Catholics had protested all through the century that they were 100 percent Americans. As it turned out, they were proclaiming a self-fulfilling prophecy. That means that every American Jesuit alive today has in his way and time lived the subtle inner changes from being an American Catholic to being a Catholic American. The older among us were not used to measuring ourselves against cultural changes; we felt we had immutable norms in Church and Company. Nonetheless, we have gone through those changes; we are changed. Deep in our interior lives, those changes add up to the Aschenbrenner Shift, which I describe in the section after next.

The Self, Passion, and the Examen

A slightly renewed frame duplex off the graceful campus of an Ivy League university, housing a community of several Jesuit graduate students. Late summer day near noon, 1965. Joe Tetlow sits down in the kitchen with Ralph Carlin, who has finished his dissertation. After some preliminary raking of old themes—obedience must mean self-fulfillment, Jesus' command to love means to love, the Company has gotten too bourgeois—Ralph announces to his good friend Joe that he will leave the Company and the priesthood and marry a wealthy

[83] Walter Jackson Ong, S.J., *Frontiers in American Catholicism* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), 2.

widow. Do what? Next Friday. In an Episcopal ceremony. Ralph felt that he had finally found who he really was. Certain unnamed experiences brought him a sense of self he had never had. He was convinced, having discussed this with a married sister and a friend, that God really wanted him to live a married life. Tetlow felt seething anger, desolate frustration—and found himself completely wordless.

What I have to say in this section may not interest everyone and can easily be passed over for the next section on the Aschenbrenner Shift. I put it here because the American perception of self and the experience of passion has exerted a considerable effect on Jesuits' practice of self-examination.

The incident (not the name) recounted above is real. Probably we have all wondered during similar events how they can happen. What makes it possible for a fully instructed man to perceive permanent commitments as impermanent? How can a mature, formed conscience swing around from blowing north-northwest into celibacy to blowing south-southeast into a marriage bed? That he had stopped defending his soul with the examination of conscience does not explain much, even if true.

That is a place to start, though. As long as Jesuits were looking into their souls, they could categorize and count sins, because the soul existed whole and was known by its acts. "By their fruits you shall know them." By 1970, however, the year the majority of Americans had moved from the city to the suburbs, Catholics had completed the migration from the City of God into the Secular City, abandoning our souls, as it were, while searching for our selves. We even stopped talking about souls; in describing the examen in 1971, George Aschenbrenner never used the word but talked instead about person, heart, and self. We had launched ourselves onto the great American search for identity.

The new language manifested ongoing changes in human self-perception, changes clear in Aschenbrenner's article and two others printed in *Review for Religious.* In his article "Consciousness Examen," Aschenbrenner dealt with the self as an independent source of spontaneous affects both good and bad. Joan Roccasalvo wrote as though the self were a singularity, somehow detached and alone, "using experience"—like hormones or protein powder?—to enhance life in Christ.[84] John Govan described the self as fragmented and needing

[84] Joan L. Roccasalvo, C.S.J., "The Daily Examen," *Review for Religious* 45

"holistic growth" in its relationships to God, nature, and others—and even to itself.[85] They were showing the end of a development Gerard Manley Hopkins had caught in an earlier stage a century ago and made poetry of.

> My own heart let me more have pity on; let
> Me live to my sad self hereafter kind,
> Charitable; not live this tormented mind
> With this tormented mind tormenting yet.
> . . . . . .
> Soul, self; come, poor Jackself, I do advise
> You, jaded, let be.[86]

Walter Ong observes of Hopkins what we have all experienced: "Thinking of the self could give rise to Hopkins's greatest enthusiasm: 'new self and nobler me,' 'God, beauty's self and beauty's giver,' or 'The sweet alms' self is her.'" But it could just as readily be "associated with interior anguish: 'self-wrung, selfstrung, sheathe- and shelterless, / thóughts agaínst thoughts ín groans grínd.'"[87] Postmodern self-perception seems simultaneously to inflate the individual and devastate him.

The Punctual Self in the Examen

As Charles Taylor observes, we had come in postmodern times to perceive the self as "punctual," no longer extended into our physical world and unchanging in its detachment even from its own actions and powers. The self had become the mere focal point of unique personal experiences. We follow John Locke in this, who refused "to identify the self or person with any substance, material or immaterial, but [made] it depend on consciousness." This is the self-perception that allows us to talk about a woman's rights over her own body roughly as though her body were the equivalent of her suitcase and precisely as though "our self-awareness is somehow detachable from its embodiment."[88]

(1986): 278–83.

[85] John Govan, S.J., "The Examen: A Tool for Holistic Growth," *Review for Religious* 45 (1986): 394–401.

[86] *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins,* introduction by Ernest Ferlita, S.J. (Nevada City, Cal.: Harold Berliner and Gonzaga University, 1986), 77.

[87] Walter Jackson Ong, S.J., *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 134. Parenthetical references to poems numbered 59, 60, and 61 are deleted, as they are found in *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins,* ed. W. H. Gardner and N. H. MacKenzie.

[88] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*

This punctual self is further distinguishable not only from all its experiences but also from its own powers, actions, and even from its own desires and aspirations. As Woody Allen explained about his affair with his stepdaughter, "The heart wants what the heart wants," as though his self were somehow at the mercy of an intractable foreign power that he had to obey. A younger Tetlow sensed something of this in Dr. Ralph Carlin.

By the eighties, moreover, Americans had come to perceive the self over against belonging to community. They no longer described an individual with an eye to distinguishing him from others in the same membership: the task had become inserting him into some membership. They started sporting emblems and brand names on everything from luggage to silk ties to running shoes. Americans no longer felt that they could confidently talk, for instance, about a "typical nun" or a "typical sailor."

In consequence, an individual's ideas, desires, and convictions are not perceived as coming from community or membership. Rather, an individual is taken as the autonomous source of ideas, desires, and convictions. As Robert Bellah and his colleagues discovered, Americans' "idiosyncratic preferences are their own justification, because they define the true self."[89]

We really conceive that all our deepest convictions and commitments rise merely from the depths of our solitary self, not reflecting on the fact that they were held by others before us and are commonly held by others around us.

Americans configure the self—to get to the issues involving the examen—as the discrete source of its own actions and even as the independent author of its own interpretations. Each American has to create not only his own acts but his own meaning for those acts as well. Surely this includes deciding when an act must be interpreted as sinful. Dr. Carlin again.

Nothing is to be taken for granted. To put that in more familiar spiritual terms, nothing is simply gift, defying any other interpretation. Americans have to labor to perceive gifts as gifts. We tend, first, to feel that we must decide whether anything that comes to us is indeed gift to us at this time and in these circumstances. And then we tend to feel either that we originate whatever is in our life or self or, if we do not originate it, that we are entitled to it.

We must not be oblivious to the spiritual implications of this enculturated conditioning in self-perception. Master Ignatius identifies something closely related to it—Hey, this is *mine!* It's really *me!* I have a *right* to this!—as the steps in the Enemy's standard, not yet sin but already a wide-open liability

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(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 171f.

[89] Robert Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 1985), 75.

to sin.[90] He calls this mind-set pride. Americans prefer to call it authenticity and approve it in the naive belief that whatever rises from the self is authentic and whatever is authentic is good. One consequence of this is often blamed on a metaphysical problem: Americans are hard pressed to conceive of an evil person. "Evil acts" or "evil ways," yes; but not an evil person. The literature suggests our forebears had no trouble with this; but try naming one authentically evil person of your acquaintance. This severely limits Americans' ability to acknowledge gravely evil attitudes and actions as truly evil and not merely mistaken or simply attributable to insanity.

Lawlessness and Loneliness

Whatever the spiritual significance of this individualistic self-perception, it has gone even further in sophisticated circles, on which Jesuit life is tangential: Michel Foucault ultimately espoused "the ideal of the aesthetic construction of the self as a work of art." He meant a great deal by that, but the core of it is that each individual creates the self as an artist creates—alone. And Jacques Derrida has inflated the literary craft of deconstruction to a philosophy whose only absolute is the power to deconstruct. He celebrates "the prodigious power of subjectivity to undo all the potential allegiances which might bind it; pure untrammeled freedom."[91] These spokesmen appear to be articulating myths that people in our life world live by as unarticulated truth. They are describing the illusion operative (in cases when illusion is indeed operative) as one man after another finds he not only can but must abandon his perpetual vows and the priesthood to marry.

In all of us this prodigious self-perception has deprived us of the easy trust that laws, human or natural, promote truly authentic growth, a trust that humanized the regimentation of community life and that supported deep meaning in the accountant's examen. As long as Jesuits trusted law and order to bring them to their own authentic growth, that self-examination was a life-giving exercise.

That trust in law is now mincing. Americans are chary of any authority whatsoever, perceiving it as a curb on, or a contamination of, necessary and holy autonomy. And they very rarely receive laws and rules as life-giving. Perversely, they run behind prophets and gurus who mock established laws and mores and promise new laws and mores to help them be other than they undesirably are.

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[90] This is the "Two Standards," *Spiritual Exercises,* [140–42].

[91] Taylor, *Sources of the Self,* 489.

As Americans, Jesuits had grown by the seventies to feel more threatened by laws and regulations than encouraged and helped by them; the rebellion against daily order, Roman collars, house rules, and times of silence were local incidents in a wider rebellion, not even specifically religious. The younger among us are more likely to be more deeply influenced by these currents, but the older among us have suffered a loosening of what Peter McDonough calls the Jesuits' "character as consistency: dependability, endurance, willpower, internalized obedience." All of those were eroded by postconciliar experiences both secular and sacred, so that by the seventies "not only did Jesuits not know what they were doing—they didn't know who they were."[92]

Finding Our Identity

Neither did anyone else. The Carnegie Commission reported in the early seventies that every institution of higher learning had to decide on its identity and almost everyone reported that the United States had lost its moral consensus. Jesuits were not helped in our struggle to trust law and rule by the (necessary) abrogation in the Thirty-Second Congregation of the "Summary of the Constitutions" of 1616 and of the "Common Rules." We had lived by the rhythms of those documents, both of which had been read at table monthly for generations.[93] No wonder Aschenbrenner promoted the consciousness examen as the "daily renewal and growth *in our religious identity.*"[94]

Any Jesuit would be mistaken to consider that he has personally escaped this altered attitude toward law, or to judge resentfully that the Company as a whole or any of his companions in particular are to blame for the attenuation of authority and the disintegration of law as a source of life.

Alienation and loneliness came in the wake of the inward turn, the search for identity, and individualism. For the more insistently a man looked inward to find his true self, the more inexorably he alienated himself from others. Jerome, Francis of Assisi, and Iñigo went inward and cut themselves off from normal social mores; but they were free to return to society and indeed pressured by it to do so. What is new in the postmodern world is the loneliness and alienation of an entire population, an entire middle class whose typical neuroticism boils up in "intensified feelings of insecurity and anxiety and intolerable aloneness."[95] With this comes to many the terror that they would

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[92] McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 10, 12.

[93] GC 32, doc. 11, ¶255.

[94] Aschenbrenner, "Consciousness Examen," 15. Italics added.

[95] Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community: A Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies Press, 1953, 1990), 15.

find no middle, only hollowness, if they turned inward in any serious way. "We are the hollow men."

These are the experiences that drive an anxious insistence on communicating, sharing, and bonding. The insecurity and the alienation give power to the feeling that "there can be no more important goal in the United States Assistancy today than directing all possible resources at developing . . . shared group dialogue in every Jesuit community."[96] They also call attention to an important condition to our recovery of the examination of conscience: deliberate, intentional membership in a community of memory and of meaning.

The Lonely Community

Jesuits have been suffering from the loneliness, alienation, and anxiety as truly as any other Americans, as Charles Shelton vividly pointed out. We may not yet find enough evidence that "personality disorders are more common in religious life than in the general population," but, back in the fifties and sixties we could hardly believe that we shared these problems with other Americans at all.[97] We had, after all, been "apart from" American culture for generations, floating above its grubby problems on a cloud of splendid abstraction. Generally, we blamed our problems simply on ourselves (namely, the Company and the Church), convinced that something must be wrong with us or with our superiors. We were grateful to Thomas Clancy when he helped us feel good about feeling bad. One of his subtexts (which are consistently worth teasing out) was that we were acting just like the rest of Americans.[98]

We have not yet very successfully diagnosed how the postmodern disease of loneliness and alienation plays out in Jesuit life, partly because the loneliness and alienation make self-examination—or almost any time spent with God in isolated silence and without the props of professionalism—seem threatening in a peculiar way. Charles Shelton was correct to argue that a healthy community will greatly promote the psychological and spiritual health of its members, but we would be very optimistic to believe that, given heathy community life, everyone in it would thereupon be without loneliness and alienation. For the deeper problem is our diminished ability to be alone.

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[96] Charles Shelton, S.J., "Toward Healthy Jesuit Community Living," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 24, no. 4 (September 1992): 38. Studies by Nisbet and others suggest that the problems may be wider than this solution would meet.

[97] Charles M. Shelton, S.J., "Reflections on the Mental Health of Jesuits," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 23, no. 4 (September 1991): 18.

[98] Thomas H. Clancy, S.J., "Feeling Bad about Feeling Good," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 11, no. 1 (January 1979).

Humanly, of course, isolated silence did not become threatening just recently: the desert has always been dangerous. But postmodern life has magnified the fear. Karen Horney expressed what many psychiatrists noted, that the neurotic personality of our time is marked by "the incapacity to be alone, varying from slight uneasiness to a restlessness to a definite terror of solitude."[99] To that fear of solitude we have added in our day fear of finding out that we have failed utterly in our autonomous responsibility *to make our selves.* So we are doubly threatened by true prayer: it will reveal to us our true selves; it will reveal our true failure to make ourselves well.

This threat affects self-examination significantly. After all, we do not see our failures and sins as mere legal lapses; we see them as expressions of our selves as we really are, as we have "made ourselves." As a matter of course, therefore, we feel defensive about any flaw in ourselves and nearly distraught at any serious failure. Responding in faith and justice to a "new call to admit our sin," as Robert Harvanek pointed out, we find that it has stirred "a new and different reluctance to admit sin within us."[100] When we must face a flaw or failure, we tend to rummage around our parenting and rearing and our early education to find someone to blame. Jesuits tend also to rummage around our formation, ordinarily with great success, for others to blame. It would be, nonetheless, excessively facile to blame all the religious dysfunctions recorded in Joseph Becker's *The Re-Formation of the Jesuits* (1992) on the process of formation and the formators.

Our bad feeling under the threat of finding the truth about our selves, or of encountering our true selves in prayer, is not pop psychology's negative self-image merely, though it is the ground in which this psychic kudzu flourishes. This bad feeling, a genuinely grave matter, must be called an existential fear of alienation and abandonment. Many Jesuits genuinely suffer that fear, often deeply covered by shame and guilt that a religious—a Jesuit—should face such a trial. It is this fear that underlies the need for constant noise, stroking, chatter, movement, and clothing whose flashy brands declare membership in *something.* This deep fear may well link a man's inability to make the examination of conscience with his addiction to hours of television, or his need for a room crowded with gear, or his grieving desire for the perfect community.

When Jesuits suffer loneliness and alienation, what do we turn to? Frank Houdek called on broad experience to make a list: "psychotherapy, support groups, smaller and more intimate liturgies, workshops about intimacy,

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[99] Cited in Nisbet, *The Quest for Community,* 16. I do not locate it at its reference in *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* (1937).

[100] Harvanek, "Reluctance to Admit Sin," 151.

selective and intentional community."[101] Not prayer. It is striking that he does not list prayer. He is correct: Jesuits suffering loneliness rarely turn to prayer as a strategy against the pain itself or its underlying causes. And yet, I must say in the end, one of our most effective processes for eluding this alienated loneliness is the prayer of the examen well made.

The Loss of Passionate Life

It would be a mistake, for all that, to identify the bad feeling of loneliness and alienation as a *problem* that needs solving. It is rather a sort of metaproblem: What needs fixing is not a habitual action or a compulsive attitude—those would be problems; what needs fixing is the lonely, alienated man who does the action or suffers the attitude. Like all metaproblems—including social violence, sexual addiction, alcoholism, and neurotic anxiety—this one is liable to solution not by pure reasonableness but only by passion.[102]

That puts us, as Americans, at a disadvantage: Americans have grown chary of passion and defend ourselves from it. Jesuits have not escaped that wariness and defensiveness. In earlier decades of this century, McDonough observes, "at the core of the tradition and the ordering of memory and the conventions of interpretation there were passion and a streak of anarchism, a perception of liberation, and simplicity."[103] He is surely correct, and his descriptors fit the accountant's examen well. But by the middle third of this century, along with all other Americans, Jesuits had begun to eschew passion and all its concomitant risks.

Here is another way to talk about the failure of the accountant's examen. It flourished in a strongly functioning community of memory as part of a passionate search for personal holiness and interior freedom. The community eroded and the passion faded. Now we are faced with a series of metaproblems—the faith that does justice, the redefinition of community life—that will yield only to passion. But passion in our day seems to rise almost exclusively when men are in solidarity. And we have lost our solidarity. Chicken and egg. This lays down another parameter in any successful recovery of the examination of conscience: the recovery of passion.

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[101] Frank J. Houdek, S.J., "Jesuit Prayer and Jesuit Ministry: Context and Possibilities," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 24, no. 1 (January 1992): 26.

[102] I do not refer to the "passio" of patristic theology or to the "passion" of transliterated scholastic philosophy and theology. I am using the term current in American English.

[103] McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 143.

Americans, to return to this general context in which Jesuits are definitively embedded as Catholic Americans, do not value passion highly and tend to think that it belongs to the past. W. H. Auden, for instance, instructed those of us who read the poetry in the breviary that passion, imaged in the female body, is gone.

> Where is that Law for which we broke our own,
> Where now that Justice for which Flesh resigned
> Her hereditary right to passion, Mind
> His will to absolute power? Gone. Gone.
> Where is that Law for which we broke our own?[104]

The New American Bible understands St. Peter to say of sinners that "they talk empty bombast while baiting their hooks with *passion,* with the lustful ways of the flesh."[105] For us, the word generally denotes carnal sex, but it connotes something deeper as well.

What do Americans mean when we say, "He acted in passion"? Almost universally, we mean either that a man acted irrationally or that he acted illegally. We often mean both.[106] If we hear that a friend perpetrated a passionate act, we anticipate that he did something criminal and was out of his mind. Consequently, Americans today do not trust passion.

Our distrust of passion has taken one notable shape: domesticating desire. We have tamed individual desire by convention and tempered it by consumerism and by advertising. Even vehement sexual desires that other peoples brand mad wildness and often consign to control by the holy, Americans put into how-to-do-it books illustrated with dry pencil drawings in the implied belief that sexuality is tame enough to control itself or that a real man is cool enough to tame it. Moreover, otherwise sensible educators honestly believe that we can initiate our young into sexuality by instructing them in genital plumbing. The only clear sexual passion common in our culture is lust, which Americans do not govern as an atavistic energy but toy with as recreational sex. News reports (hundreds daily, it seems) of savage sexual crimes do not occasion healthy catharsis that strengthens moral resolve, but simply supply titillation.

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[104] W. H. Auden, "For the Time Being," cited in *The Liturgy of the Hours,* vol. 1, *Advent and Christmas Season,* trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1975), 1666.

[105] 2 Peter 2:18 New American Bible (Encino Cal., Benzinger: 1970). Italics added.

[106] Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *Passion: An Essay on Personality* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 101–7.

As for other great human desires—for holiness, for true justice—we have stifled them or rationalized them into institutional structures like mass revivalism or the American Civil Liberties Union.

Catholics have not escaped this domestication of desire. In 1985 Benedictine Sebastian Moore contended that the original sin afflicts us with a disordered weakness of desiring.[107] Our yearning to transcend self and time has melted into inertia. He invented a name for it: erosthenia, an oxymoronic word composed, I suppose, from *eros* (passionate yearning) and *asthenēs* (weak). Among Jesuit writers, Edward Kinerk found reason to write an essay urging the importance of great desires in Jesuit spirituality, an urging Jesuits apparently needed to hear, since the essay has proved one of the more popular issues of *Studies.*[108]

Problem Solving and Passion

Kinerk's study came as good news to Jesuits who had not wanted much for a long time and who had let problem solving displace passion in their self-examination.

Problem solving presumes an established worldview or at least a rationale, whether explicit or inarticulated. *Divide et impera,* divide and conquer sins and faults in the examination of conscience, a spiritual director used to tell philosophers in the fifties. Problem solving puts the self in play to divide experience into manageable pieces in order to hold some equilibrium between stability and change, the ideal self and actual behavior, or the self and the life world (or at times to keep equilibrium on all three axes).

Passion rises from the core of the self as desire and design charged with affective power and meaning but still reasonable. Ultimately, a man follows passion either into the great configurations of sin (pride, covetousness, lust, and so on) or into the great configurations of virtue (faith, hope, love).[109] Passion connects the person and his life world; problem solving lets him stand apart from it while working on it. The Mozart of *Amadeus* threw himself into his roiling world and created in passion; its Salieri managed his milieu and made music by problem solving. The work of Einstein, who solved one of science's

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[107] Sebastian Moore, O.S.B., *Let This Mind Be in You: The Quest for Identity through Oedipus to Christ* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 85.

[108] E. Edward Kinerk, S.J., "Eliciting Great Desires: Their Place in the Spirituality of the Society of Jesus," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 16, no. 5 (November 1984).

[109] Unger, *Passion,* 221-47. It is of keen interest to Jesuits that Unger, writing secular philosophy, argues on page 231 that "[t]here is nothing to choose between sexual and sexless love as pictures of human encounter." Both engage and develop full humanity.

greatest problems, was empowered by deep passion; the work of Jimmy Carter—which dealt with metaproblems like historical ethnic hatreds (Egypt and Israel), colonial injustices (Panama Canal), and ecological disasters wrought by profligate energy policies—seems to have been energized by problem solving.

During the immediate postconciliar period, Jesuits called on themselves to make a fairly distinct change from problem solving to the uses of passion. A comparison of the differing rhetorics of the Thirty-First Congregation (1965) and the Thirty-Second Congregation (1974) suggests the extent of the change.

The rhetoric of the Thirty-First Congregation demonstrates how carefully Jesuits had put passion aside by midcentury. The year 1965 witnessed the first walks in space; revolutions in Algeria and Rhodesia; and, in America, the Selma civil-rights march, the Watts riots, and anti-war demonstrations in Washington. During that same year the Thirty-First Congregation spoke in a level voice in notably objective and generally impersonal terms. It addressed discrete problems serially in fifty-six decrees, in general by requiring that things should or should not be done, promulgating excellent legislation dispassionately. Decree 19, for example, "Community Life and Religious Discipline," began with an emotional evocation of relationships among the first "friends in the Lord" but continued in a more level tone: "Priests, brothers, and scholastics should all associate with one another easily, in sincerity, evangelical simplicity, and courtesy, as is appropriate for a real family gathered together in the name of the Lord."[110]

But in the welter of changes unleashed by the Second Vatican Council, Jesuits began finding passion again. The Thirty-Second Congregation (1974) gathered men from Chile just after Salvador Allende's ouster and mysterious death; from Africa threatened with devastating drought; from India, which had just developed an atomic bomb; and from the United States, still nervous about the resignations of a vice president and a president. The congregation erupted at the start with a confession of sinfulness and seemed to be struggling through the key decrees to control its voice. It was keenly and constantly careful of historical developments, even in definitions:

> *[T]oday* the Jesuit is a man whose mission is to dedicate himself entirely to the service of faith and the promotion of justice, in a communion of life and work and sacrifice with the companions who have rallied round the same standard of the Cross and in fidelity to the Vicar of Christ, for the building up of a world at once more human and more divine.[111]

Individual Jesuits, too, had set passion aside by roughly the middle of this century. Can you recall the last time you were passionately stirred during

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[110] GC 31, dec. 19, ¶328.

[111] GC 32, dec. 2, ¶41. Italics added.

the noon examen? The question itself is droll. These are not: How often have you wept during prayer? What passions does a reading of the Thirty-Second or the Thirty-Third Congregations' documents stir in you? Have you a feeling towards anyone in the Company that you can honestly call love? What passions move your life as a scholar or teacher or retreat giver or preacher?

Most of us would have answers to these questions, because we have begun to turn (or turn back) to passion, perhaps led by our martyred brothers and the liberation theologians. Even during the late sixties and the seventies, when Jesuits talked about bettering our prayer, for instance, we insisted above all on a return to affectivity. In our turn to faith doing justice in the seventies and eighties, we opened our hearts to the marginated and the minorities and some of us found out how we are to learn from them.

In a certain measure and in various ways, this all meant that we rediscovered passion. And as we found passion, we found a new mode of self-examination: discernment, which William Spohn describes as "the use of symbols and affectivity to find the personally fitting course of action."[112]

The Aschenbrenner Shift

A bungalow with a glassed-in porch on the bank of the silted Tangipahoa River. Spring flood, 1971. Joe Tetlow sits and stares into the roiling water through the grey Spanish-moss beards on emerald cypresses. He is dean at Loyola of the South at the peak of the Vietnam madness. He helped lead antiwar demonstrations in the quadrangle while dentistry students railed out of classroom windows. Several departments are refusing to sign their contracts, claiming misfeasance by the former dean, and several students are refusing to take core theology courses, claiming they renounced their faith. The president has told him in confidence that he is leaving university, Company, andpriesthood. The vice president has been voted a liar by the faculty senate. Everyone is dotty. Tetlow does not make much formal prayer. After a bout with walking pneumonia, he regularly comes to the

[112] William C. Spohn, S.J., "The Reasoning Heart: An American Approach to Christian Discernment," in *The Reasoning Heart,* ed. Frank M. Oppenheim, S.J. (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1986), 51. See also J. J. Mueller, S.J., "Appreciative Awareness: The Feeling Dimension in Religious Experience," in the same volume.

bungalow on the Tangipahoa to stare into the middle distance and try to find his own center and his God.

George Aschenbrenner's article "The Consciousness Examen" caught and channeled the major postmodern spiritual currents that I have been discussing. Those currents erupted with volcanic force in the late sixties and early seventies on our campuses, but they rumbled as well in our retreat houses (silence was banished, faith sharing instigated) and sprinkled grit even onto our parishes. Suddenly, we faced lay boards of trustees, parish councils, faculty rights and student freedoms, province congresses, community meetings, lay garb, and small communities. These were new grooves marking shifts as deep and definitive as the San Andreas Fault.

Aschenbrenner's dense reflections are not easy to summarize, but the article has appeared nonetheless in many reprints, outlines, and paraphrases. His analysis still makes excellent sense, capturing as it does the consequences that the many shifts entail for the examen, and still tells us a great deal about our examination of conscience.

Aschenbrenner perceived, to begin with, a broadening of the examination of conscience away from a routine check on sin. It was "a daily renewal and growth in our religious identity—this unique flesh-spirit person being loved by God and called by Him deep in his personal affective world." It had become imperative, Aschenbrenner contended, to make the examen by "confronting my own identity in Christ before the Father," and indeed impossible to make a true Examen without that confrontation.[113]

Religious had a problem seeing that, he thought, and readily dropped the examination of conscience because they failed to sense in themselves "two spontaneities, one good and for God, another evil and not for God" (14). Yet these spirits rise in everyone all the time. Attending to them is the real point of the exercise, which is now "an examen of consciousness rather than of conscience" (14). This examen requires discernment, the process of distinguishing in our own spirits which of the spontaneities now moves us. Discernment requires the listening attitude of the contemplative. Hence, the examen "is

[113] Aschenbrenner, "Consciousness Examen," 15, 15. In the next four paragraphs, a page number immediately follows each citation.

ultimately aimed at developing a heart with a discerning vision to be active not only for one or two quarter-hour periods in a day but continually" (16).

As Aschenbrenner saw it, then, the Examen does not in the first instance "review in some specific detail, our actions . . . so we can catalogue them as good or bad" (17f). Rather, it begins asking "what has been happening in us, how has the Lord been working in us, what has He been asking us" (18), and only then turns to review actions. This examen can go on only on condition that "we have become sensitive to our interior feelings, moods, and slightest urgings and that we are not frightened by them but have learned to take them very seriously" (18). When we come to our sins, sorrow rises particularly at our lack of honesty and courage in response to God's initiatives; contrition proceeds from a heart "always in song" (19). It is "not a shame nor a depression at our weakness" (20); far from that, it is an enactment of trust in God's saving love. Finally, the examen ends with our face to the future and the effort to know "the atmosphere of our hearts" (20) as we confront what lies ahead.

Aschenbrenner's description may seem to have put the consciousness examen beyond the reach of many, but he argued that each religious needed to adapt the examen "to his stage of development and the situation in the world in which he finds himself" (16). A religious must guard against giving up daily formal self-examination on the grounds that he has reached a kind of permanently discerning heart. Furthermore, he need not fear the format suggested by *Spiritual Exercises;* for Aschenbrenner believed that, while the five points of the examen may seem mechanical to the beginner, they are ultimately experienced in faith "as dimensions of the Christian consciousness" (16). Subjectively, they grow to be "integrated dimensions of our own consciousness looking out on the world" (16).

The foundational insight in this article rose from Aschenbrenner's appreciation of Ignatius's finding God "whenever he wished, at whatever hour," as his autobiography put it. The mature Ignatius was able to find God "in all things through a test for congruence of any interior impulse, mood, or feeling with his true self" (21). If he felt "dissonance, agitation, and disturbance" (21), he recognized the interior impulse as an evil spirit; if "deep quiet, peace, and joy" (21), he recognized the good spirit. Aschenbrenner gauged that all through his life, Master Ignatius kept this general process of discernment closely linked with the two daily examens.

Consequences of the Shift

Aschenbrenner identified an authentic movement among Catholic Americans to a new kind of moral and spiritual consciousness and a new moral gauge. It is this movement, concretized in the consciousness examen, that I call the Aschenbrenner Shift.

Two things have grown clearer about the shift during the twenty years since Aschenbrenner's article appeared. First, it offered a vehicle for the postmodern energies of inwardness that move us all: the search for an immanent God, merciful and consoling; the experience of ongoing creation; the discernment of spirits in lieu of reasoning to moral conclusions; the inward search for our most authentic desiring; the feel of sin as the breach or bruising of our relationship with God and with others; a tentative opening to passion; an experience of the self as an unfolding, not yet complete reality; and an almost implicit trust in personal experience. All of these energies focus down into "congruence with the true, authentic self" as the moral gauge of an action's or an affect's goodness. The consciousness examen both enabled postmodern energies and structured their exercise.

Second, the consciousness examen carried into self-examination the affective, appreciative approach of the *Contemplatio ad amorem.* That was crucial, for the Aschenbrenner Shift had made unfeasible for us the reasoned, objective approach of the examination of conscience based (in point of historical fact, not de jure) on the Principle and Foundation.[114] These different linkages are at the core of the differences between the examination of conscience and the consciousness examen.

We have already explored, in the history of the accountant's examen, the exercise's connection with the Principle and Foundation and its reasoned invocation of the transcendent God in an eschatological frame. In order to make some useful points about the consciousness examen, I need to note some things here about the Contemplation.

The Postmodern Contemplation

The Contemplation itself has at times been thought of as the theological conclusion to the philosophy of the Principle and Foundation. Maurice Meschler argued, for instance, that the love of God "is, indeed, contained in the Foundation," where we discover that "it follows with natural necessity from our dependence upon God and from our subordination to him, both of which are essential to our nature as God's creatures." But Master Ignatius waits until the

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[114] See Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J., "The Fundamentum," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 21, no. 4 (September 1989): 39, and especially fn. 64.

soul has rid itself of sin and ordered itself before inviting it to undertake the Contemplation, where it may "by *reasoning* rise to the idea of the uncreated goodness and beauty of God."[115]

American Jesuits have lost that blessed intuition of reasoned order; no one that I have ever directed has found the graces of the Contemplation "by reasoning." In postmodern thought "what we are called on to do is not to become contemplators of order, but rather to construct a picture of things following the canons of rational thinking."[116] In postmodern prayer, in line with that, we are not so much contemplators of a fixed-order divine plan as witnesses to human disorder, and we undertake prayer in the hope that we will find meaning. We are indeed confident that everything follows some mastering order. Our confidence, however, no longer belongs to the virtue of faith, as it did for Meschler; we do not believe in "God's plan." Our confidence is a trust and belongs to the deepest exercise of the virtue of hope, as it did for Teilhard; we hope for the enactment of God's project.

Consequently, we do not go to the Contemplation, or to the consciousness examen, already resonating with divine and cosmic order. We go to those exercises in the hope of putting some order into our experience. In the Contemplation, we gaze on the kaleidoscope of being and acting and try to find meaning according to the exercise's four points of interpretive order: All is God's gift; God dwells throughout all; in all God works busily; all that we are participates in what God is. For as postmodern men we now esteem rationality as "above all a property of the process of thinking, not of the substantive content of thought."[117] Our cultural attitude toward reason as instrumental has its drawbacks, but we are freed by it to make a self-examination that relies on affects and emotions, convictions and commitments, good and bad spirits, as well as on rational discourse. This is precisely what Aschenbrenner configured and furthered.

Meschler interpreted the Contemplation as the spiritual enjoyment of the constant gift of love, both divine and human. More recently, directors seem to think of it pragmatically in terms of confirmation of the election or choices made. Now, it is perhaps better for us to think of the Contemplation as an exercise in the lifelong process of learning to love the way God loves. Understood this way, the exercise takes up and magnifies the process initiated by the four weeks of the long retreat and gives it shape for the days to come.

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[115] Maurice Meschler, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius,* trans. from the German, 2nd ed. (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College Press, 1899), 119, 121. Italics added. This book continued in use into the fifties.

[116] Taylor, *Sources of the Self,* 168.

[117] Ibid.

We are in a good position, it seems to me, to draw great benefit from this process Contemplation, both in retreats and as the fundamental dynamic of self-examination.

As God draws creatively from his divine Self and lavishes gifts on his creatures and by laboring in those gifts shares with us his own Godhead, so am I to draw creatively from my own self, to lavish gifts on all around me, and, by laboring in and with my own gifts, to share myself with others, a man for others. Thrown into this light, the holiness of a man's reaching moral closure by discerning the congruence of everything with his true Christ-centered self seems more realistic and less narcissistic.

The Contemplation in the Examen

It will be useful to explore how the Contemplation gives shape to the examen, point by point. For this will begin to describe the examen that we can fruitfully make at the end of the American Century.

Aschenbrenner himself insisted that the stance underlying the consciousness examen had to be "that of a poor person possessing nothing, not even himself, and yet being gifted at every instant and through everything."[118] That is the first point of the Contemplation: All is gift, I am gift. As John English of Guelph put it in one of the very many parallels of Aschenbrenner's work, "I come before God as one who has been gifted by Him. I owe Him everything . . . I am struck by God's great goodness to me. . . . So I use the time of the Examen to bring gratitude into my conscious awareness so that I can learn to have an abiding consciousness of who God is and how good He is."[119] This becomes the first point of the examen.

The Contemplation's second point is how God remains in his gifts. The examen's second point, a prayer for light, operates on the belief that the Holy Spirit dwells in things and events and in my own spirit, inspiring and moving. The movements I am looking for are the movements I "remained in," imitating God who remains in his gifts. The good movements among them, I acknowledge, come from the same Spirit who also constantly creates movements among those around me in my life world.

The Contemplation's third point is how God works busily in all his gifts. The examen's third point, an examination of my day, also leads me to identify the movements in my spirit that God effected and the countermove-

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[118] Aschenbrenner, "Consciousness Examen," 17.

[119] John English, S.J., leaflet, n.d., n.p. This would be one of the many handouts that the Jesuits of Guelph created while introducing North America to the directed retreat.

ments that some other force effected. I probe how I perceive, accept, and appreciate God's busy action in my life world and self and how I have valued other spirits' movements. So I go on to probe my responses—omission, action, interpretation—which, unless sinful, are also God's pure gift. So I try in the examen's third point to find what God has achieved in me during this day or this time, where I have consented and cooperated and where I have rejected his working.

The examen's fourth point focuses on that rejecting. More keenly aware of my inner experiences of God in Christ, I ask how I have been living our relationship, whether I have been returning this kind of love. Where I have not, I grieve for it and notice what my failure is about. As I grow in learning to love as God loves, I grow in the awareness that every one of my failures takes root in a failure to love God in deed.

The Contemplation's fourth point calls on me to consider how God shares the divine Self and how I am to share my own self in return. This divine sharing is the ground of the relationships of creature to Creator, existence; and of sinner to Redeemer, pardon and liberation. This intimate relationship functions far from legalistic obedience: it is a relationship of instant, co-creative union. It is the true ground of sorrow for sin and desire to repent.

In the examen's fifth point, then, I stand with God, aware of myself as God is of me, and recommit myself to the kind of relationship that God elicits in me at this moment, including the kind of growth in my self that God elicits and the letting go of whatever in me has not come from God.

Trapped in Individualism

Manifestly, my actual, unique relationship with God defines the way I am to make the examen at a given time, so that any Jesuit can make this examen. There might be an exception: Perhaps the man whose conscience still functions at what Kohlberg calls the conventional level would face a great challenge in this examen. He still judges right and wrong by what "they say" in popular moral conventions and will not reflect on his own moral convictions. He cannot make this examen. It must be plain, on the other hand, that even a mystic who cannot look at the stars without weeping in joy could—did, indeed—make such a self-examination.

Another kind of man could—did, indeed—make this examen: the victim of American narcissistic individualism, which reached typhoon force in the sixties. Aschenbrenner carefully warned against "the dangers of an unhealthy self-centered introspection."[120] But we could take that as the same warning against over-psychologizing that we had heard from novice masters and read in

[120] Aschenbrenner, "Consciousness Examen," 15.

Coemans. Aschenbrenner's *monitum* may have had a different intent, but we missed it when we heard what the consciousness examen was to cover.

> The prime concern [in the accountant's examen] was with what good or bad actions we had done each day. In discernment the prime concern is not with the morality of good or bad actions; rather the concern is how the Lord is affecting and moving us (often quite spontaneously!) deep in our own affective consciousness.[121]

In narcissistic, individualistic ears, this sounded as though our concern had once been with the morality of actions and now must be with our "affective consciousness" about those actions. It sounded as though our concern had once been with morality and was now with how we felt about it. Aschenbrenner said none of this. But it is what a good many men heard who were unreflective or unaware of the social and intellectual forces shaping their listening.

This emphasis on individual consciousness at the expense of an adequate emphasis on action has grown during the two decades since Aschenbrenner's article. Herbert Alphonso, whose vivid phrase began this essay, argued in 1990 that "precisely because it is an exercise in discernment, the 'Examination of Conscience' is an *examination of consciousness*—consciousness of our real concrete experience, whatever it be."[122] Too great stress on *consciousness* as opposed to what we concretely *did* has distorted the meaning of what Alphonso and others now deal with as a commonplace: "God accepts me *unconditionally.*"

Accepting Acceptance Rightly

Surely, we know that is true. But in stressing our experience of God's acceptance and making it the whole truth, we have made ourselves liable to forget two other pertinent truths. First, *to accept* does not mean *to approve* or *to condone.* God loves us infinitely but hates our sin as much. So when we are examining our lives and find sin, acceptance, both self-acceptance and God's, must mean that we recognize a failure or evildoing and move on to forthright shame or guilt and to repentence. Some writers have been so eager that we not lose sight of God's *acceptance* that they seem to misplace God's judgment.[123]

And second, when we remember that God accepts me as I am, we can all too easily stay with an image of the self as a point in our life world, the mere focus of an unrepeatable experience. As narcissistic individualists—we males have deepened in narcissism over the past years, therapists testify—we search tirelessly for evidences "at the core of our being, of our deepest and truest 'self,' of our unrepeatable uniqueness."[124] Our self-examination too readily

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[121] Ibid., 14.

[122] Alphonso, *The Personal Vocation,* 65.

[123] Ibid., 67.

[124] Ibid., 26.

excludes the realities that we are utterly webbed into other lives, accountable to others around us in multiple ways, and responsible for others around us in complex ways. God saves his People, and no one of us apart from the rest. God accepts me, not like a lone candle in a vast dark space, but like a fine voice in a choir making a personal contribution to the song all sing.

Many of us seem to have fallen into these two failures—facile self-acceptance, tight self-focus—in the consciousness examen. For these and other reasons, some of us turned away from it as an exercise in narcissism and too far removed from urgent issues around us.

Apparently sensing this limitation a decade after his first article, Aschenbrenner wrote a follow-up, "A Check on Our Availability: The Examen ," the main point of which is that "the daily Examen is the *primary* means to maintain this disposition of Ignatian and, indeed, of all apostolic availability."[125]

That introduced a good advance but it may not have gone far enough to counteract our narcissistic individualism. "Availability" does indeed name a holy interior attitude and a graced state of spirit. But if we take it as a merely interior disposition, we make "availability" meaningless. It is full of meaning only when it names not only a man's current relations with himself and God but also a web of his existential relationships with a concrete cohort of people in concrete contexts. This incomplete list might suggest the complexity of full apostolic availability: a man's demonstrated abilities and actual achievements and his appreciation of them; his attitudes toward and desires about concrete works; superiors' known or inferred thoughts and plans; the actual relationship between current superiors and the individual; the varied relations with other Jesuits and with groups and individuals who might be served; and so on. That "availability" names considerably more than the punctual self's preoccupations, however holy; and if availability proves one of the reasons for making the examen, then the examen must somehow encompass all of those complex elements.

We will not have gone far enough to rediscover the examen until we sense that it is almost as meaningless to talk about "my examen" as it is to talk about "my Mass." That is what the Thirty-Third General Congregation intimated.

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[125] George A. Aschenbrenner, S.J., "A Check on Our Availability: The Examen," *Review for Religious* 39 (1980): 322.

The Masculine Energies

Xavier Hall Tertianship, Austin, Texas. The tertian director sits in his room late in a July night fighting to remember the details of the day. He had scheduled too many things. He had diddled through a meeting, uncertain of his role. He recalls things left undone, neglected for some days. Wondering whom he has been trying to impress, he falls asleep.

If Aschenbrenner correctly identified a shift in our interior life and prescribed an exercise appropriate for us, why—twenty years later—do we still find the examen unfeasible?

Is it Rickaby all over again: We just do not care, or haven't identified the right sins, or aren't journaling? Are Jesuit Americans simply too action oriented and unreflective, altogether prone to *effusio ad exteriora,* pouring ourselves out on busyness, as Zachary Maher feared?

Any problem might explain an individual case, but all of us have problems making the adjustments imposed on consecrated men by the historical shifts in postmodern consciousness and self-perception that have hardly run their course. We may be helped along by reviewing what those shifts have meant in each man by looking at them one more time, generally in terms of masculine spirituality and particularly in terms of Jungian insights into the archetypical configuration of men's energies.

I will focus here on two of the archetypical energies: the Warrior (he was the Jesuit of the Long Black Line) and the King (he is the Jesuit of the Constitutions' "discerning love"). A description of Jesuits' loss of the archetypical Warrior energy gives a good feel for how the accountant's examen lost its usefulness. A brief description of the archetypical King energy suggests that it might give mature life to the consciousness examen.

The studies of masculinity may seem like pop psych, and much in print surely is trendy fluff. But the ideas impress some important thinkers. Walter Ong, for instance, has contributed a luminous exploration of contest, sexuality, and consciousness, in which he accounted for the decay of the classical hero and the failure of masculine agonistic enterprises, a subset of which would surely be great deeds done for God.[126] He argued convincingly that the energy for contest and for what he calls agonistic activities—the core energy of the Warrior—had

[126] The Hero forms another archetype; the Warrior has been contaminated with it.

been in decline for quite a long while. He considered this decline in the specifically masculine energy "not unrelated . . . to women's liberation movements, student demonstrations, pacifism, and the substitution of the existential, noncontesting fugitive hero . . . in place of the agonistic hero of the older epic and romance."[127] That substitution also took place in self-examination.

The Erosion of the Warrior

The loss of the agonistic hero and his replacement with a protagonist who eschews contest and distrusts heroism have eroded the energies of the Warrior. Boys are no longer reared with perilous combat in mind. As people sang during the First World War, perhaps more significantly than they knew, "I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier." There lay a problem. The hero, archetypically a Warrior, had transmuted before this century into the soldier, and that transmutation took place just as the soldier was growing more mechanized and war more utterly impersonal.

Robert Bly tends to believe that "the conscious warrior and his ideals ended during the American Civil War's last battles, which amounted to slaughter." Whatever might have been left was incinerated by the stupidity of Ypres in 1915, the inferno bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima a generation later, and the blind obliteration by B-52s of Vietnam's villages in the sixties.[128] Social historians have begun studying how the Warrior energies were commandeered by business and male associations. One of them sees connections at the turn of the century among the Warrior, routine violence, business, and religion.[129] Another argues that the "long and 'perilous' initiatory journey" that men's secret fraternal organizations used as rites at the turn of the century "facilitated the young man's transition to, and acceptance of, a remote and problematic conception of manhood," which he needed in spite of its faultiness as the conception shaped by the Warrior archetype faded more and more.[130] Popular opinion views Latin machismo as a spurious Warrior energy.

This much is clear: The noble fame of the Warrior had been debased by the beginning of this century. One of the exhibits at the Chicago World's

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[127] Walter Jackson Ong, S.J., *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1981), 29.

[128] Robert Bly, *Iron John: A Book about Men* (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1990), 155.

[129] T. J. Jackson Lears, "The Destructive Element: Modern Commercial Society and the Martial Ideal," chap. 3 of *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

[130] Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), ix.

Fair in 1893 was a knight in full armor on horseback made entirely of California prunes.

In the twentieth century, the Warrior has transmuted from the heroic Sergeant York to the murderers of *Apocalypse Now,* from Shane to Clint Eastwood's Dirty Harry, from the Lone Ranger to the Green Beret to Rambo and the Terminator. Robert Bly pictures this vividly as "the decline of the Warrior to soldier to murderer."[131] The ersatz warriors on television and in popular writing live by violence, one measure of the archetype's corruption.

The Archetype of the Warrior

Archetypically, the Warrior does not fight much, perhaps one day in a thousand. His full, rich energies could just as well engage in a battle that is social, psychological, or spiritual.[132] Most of his days he spends faithfully within the boundaries of his place, alert in steady service.[133] He is in service to a King or to something greater than himself; the Warrior energy pulses around an ideal to which the Warrior is committed body and soul *[sic].* He lives in that service and willingly dies for it. To the Warrior, the ideal virtue is loyalty. That ideal is expressed in a code that is not a list of arbitrary regulations but actually "a total way of life," "a spiritual or psychological path through life."[134] The warrior knows the code thoroughly, trusts it, and keeps it rigorously.[135] He endures, persists, *semper paratus.* He keeps order in the city, the camp, and his own kit.

The Warrior knows his boundaries, both his personal boundaries and his city's, within which he protects himself and those he is given to protect. He is effective and sober and has a great sense of control, first of all over his own attitudes and habits. He has no great sense of humor, but does have a strong and appropriate anger that moves him to keep the code or defend his city. His anger also flares when any among his own companions break the code or act disloyally. He is self-sufficient to begin with, but a team player. He loves his comrades, but only within their mutual loyalty under their ideal and not apart

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[131] Bly, *Iron John,* 156.

[132] Ibid., 150. See the study on *hombría* in David D. Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 44–48.

[133] Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1990), 75–96.

[134] Ibid., 79.

[135] Carnes, *Secret Rituals,* gives much memorable evidence from Victorian times of how eagerly American males have sought codes, and how long men have instinctively felt established codes sifting away.

from it.[136] In his personal relations, "[h]e is emotionally distant as long as he is in the Warrior" energy, which may suggest the ground of one difference between older Jesuits, who have been at the very least conversant with the Warrior, and younger Jesuits, who have never met him.[137]

The Warrior's Examen

When older Jesuits were still young, the Warrior still glimmered in the knight of the thirteenth (the greatest) century, in Teddy Roosevelt, and in the likes of Charles Lindberg and General John Pershing. In their long black lines, Jesuits felt the great strength of the Warrior energy. That long black line grew into a stereotype, reminding others precisely of the Warrior: the pope's light cavalry, a military order, the Church's soldiers who practiced blind obedience.

To the anonymous Jesuit author of a pamphlet celebrating Florissant's centenary in 1925, the Warrior energies seemed to summarize everything the Company was. He characterized the novitiate as "two years of hard spiritual training" during which a man learned "in this drill school the discipline of Christ's skirmishers." The novice made the long retreat, the spiritual experience that "changed Ignatius the Soldier of Spain into Ignatius the Soldier of Christ."[138]

When Robert Moore, the drawling social psychologist who has popularized archetypes in recent years, contemplated the "Warrior in his full energies," he thought of the Jesuits. Ancient history abounds with "spiritual Warriors," he observed. "The religion of Islam as a whole is built on Warrior energy."

We see this same Warrior energy manifested in the Jesuit Order in Christianity, which for centuries taught self-negation for the sake of carrying God's message into the most hostile and dangerous areas of the world. The man who is a Warrior is devoted to his cause, his God, his civilization, even unto death.[139]

There is the energy that drove the accountant's examen. Perhaps now we might think of it as *the Warrior's examen,* in fact a more adequate description. For Jesuits had, from the twenties through the forties, deep loyalty, clear boundaries, and a war to win. We had established rules and a code, then, not a "way of proceeding," which we reluctantly started to think about only when

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[136] J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (San Francisco: Harper Row, 1959), 106–9.

[137] Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior,* 85.

[138] Cited in McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 146.

[139] Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior,* 85.

Father General Pedro Arrupe urged it in 1979.[140] We set definite boundaries: apostolic works we would not do; stern measure in alcohol, in travel, in contact with "externs"; proper topics and designated times for conversation. We monitored our own attitudes and governed our habits. Occasional Warrior-like humor broke through, as in the final rule in the old parody: "If anyone would do anything, let him not do it." We were *ready:* novices and jubilarians responded routinely and readily to twenty-odd fire bells a day. And we felt our energies focus as we went to the bulletin board on July 31 to get our next assignment.

All of that was possible and almost inevitable as long as the Society of Jesus could elicit the energies of the Warrior. All of it, we need to recall, served apostolic purposes, for Jesuits were holy Warriors in the titanic battle against sin and evil. Regularly during renovation reading, we heard Father General Luis Martín express the passionate hope that "we strongly guard the fortress of religion and as the true and genuine offspring of our Father, St. Ignatius, fight the battles of God with the unflinching fortitude with which he fought them."[141] Jaded or not with reading at table, we could hardly not listen to Father General Ledóchowski entreat his men "to frustrate the attacks of the enemies of God . . . the horrible blasphemies, the unspeakable sacrileges, and the cruel crimes," adding up to "the greatest and most widespread revolt" imaginable against God.[142] American Jesuits were largely unaware that the heat in this rhetoric rose from frictions between the papacy and European states.

The Warrior and the Examen

It is important just at this point to note how the description of the Warrior illumines the person of Master Ignatius. Iñigo de Loyola was certainly not what we mean by a soldier; just as certainly, he was a paradigm and even a paragon of the energies configured above, the Warrior's. Past generations of Jesuits could find consolation in the image of a "soldier saint" and encouragement in making their examination of conscience, because they resonated with the Warrior energy.

They began that resonance with *Spiritual Exercises.* "There are those," Master Ignatius wrote in the "Kingdom," "who feel greater desires to show loyalty to their eternal King and universal Lord, and to distinguish themselves

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[140] Pedro Arrupe, S.J., "Our Way of Proceeding," in *Five Recent Documents from Fr. General Pedro Arrupe, S.J., on Spirituality for Today's Jesuits* (New Orleans: New Orleans Province, 1980), 35–64.

[141] Father General Luis Martín, "On Some Dangers of Our Times," in *Renovation Reading,* rev. and enlarged (Woodstock, Md.: Woodstock College, 1931), 119.

[142] Ledóchowski, *Writings,* 603.

by serving Him completely" [97]. The General examen summoned a man to "demand an account" of himself [43] and to "strive to amend" [25]. The "Two Standards" called on a man to stand with Christ, "to be received under His standard" [147], in the agonistic struggle against the forces of evil. The "Norms Followed in Discerning Spirits" included an image of Satan as a captain in the field conniving to "explore the forces and fortifications of a citadel" [327] he is about to storm, the Jesuit's soul.

Today, directors agree, these military images do not elicit such great vision and desires as they once did. Part of the reason must be clear: We have lost the Warrior energy. Patrick Arnold believed that "the Warrior archetype survives today in most men, though usually in an unconscious state." And far from trying to resuscitate it (which Arnold believes imperative), "religion now largely neglects it."[143] In my own and other directors' experiences with the long retreat, Arnold is correct: men experience Jesus Christ as Transformer of Culture or Nurturer of Humankind, but rarely as the galvanizing Warrior of Matthew's Gospel or the triumphant Redeemer of Revelation.

This is a central and uniquely important matter. We seem to have misplaced altogether the fierce rabbi from Nazareth, tearing through the temple with a whip, and stinging the powerful with taunts of their injustice. "Jesus is often portrayed as one who was concerned about our spiritual well-being, our 'eternal life,'" and never about anything in our life world, and he became altogether spiritualized.[144] A gentle Savior and tender Friend? Whatever happened to the valiant Redeemer who singly faced both religious and civil authorities? who singlehandedly launched the only definitive revolution? who all alone challenged sin and death? That is a whole other study that badly needs to be made.

To the point here: The Victor Christ was vibrantly present in the Warrior's examen. That exercise once engaged precisely the energies of the Warrior: an ideal of holiness, a code, exact observance, clearly set boundaries, control of attitude and habit, endurance, persistence, *semper paratus.* The rhetoric of the examination of conscience often elaborated "fighting against sin" and "eradicating our faults." Still, this agonistic struggle was not private; personal holiness related immediately to the Church's labor. The rousing title of Herbert O'H. Walker's popular anthem "Our Way of Life Must Prevail" says it exactly.[145]

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[143] Patrick M. Arnold, S.J., *Wildmen, Warriors, and Kings: Masculine Spirituality and the Bible* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 33.

[144] Michael Cook, S.J., "Jesus' Parables and the Faith That Does Justice," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 24, no. 5 (November 1992): 2.

[145] Cited in McDonough, *Men Astutely Trained,* 339.

If Martin Marty *(The Public Church)* and Richard John Neuhaus *(The Catholic Moment)* are correct, the Catholic way of life may be prevailing, but not the way Walker thought. For the holy crusades have passed and conventional wisdom today has it that "the habit of organizing society around the warfare system, and the psyche of men around the necessity to become warriors, is rapidly becoming a historical anachronism."[146]

In consequence, the Warrior energy has become to the spiritual quest what prunes are to nutrition. Men have lost something very good in this: the keen sense of worthy struggle, the steadying feel of getting along with it, and even the concept of making progress, one that Master Ignatius used a great deal. These are things very valuable to the masculine spirit. But I know almost no one in my own cohort, and almost no tertian, theologian, or collegian, who works mainly out of the Warrior energy.

The Warrior energies are neither available to us nor the most helpful now. We need to awake in ourselves another kind of energy, that of the King.

This archetype imbues a man with a sense of being gifted and chosen and of having privileged status. It endows him with a connatural access to transcendent powers. While anyone can decide to be a Warrior, a King is chosen. A man works up to Warrior; he wakes up a King. That gives keen focus to his self and lays under all his actions a foundation of gratitude to the Giver of this gift.

The shift from archetypical Warrior to King energy colored the Second Vatican Council's reading of "the signs of the times": We are the People of God, chosen and consecrated. The shift still moves us in our practice of the Spiritual Exercises. Thirty years ago, we marched through the long retreat in platoons: same meditations on the same preached points, same diet, same break days. We all went through one or two preparation days of fairly muscular workout on the end of man and indifference, which gave us clarity on "the essence of self-conquest" and stirred up the energies of the Warrior for "conquering what is bad and inordinate."[147]

We conduct the Exercises very differently today. Each man gets individual attention. Regimentation is restricted to a time for meals and Mass. Almost all men spend four or five preparation days pondering how God accepts us as we are, cherishes us, and even calls each of us as he called Jeremiah and

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[146] Sam Keen, *Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), 113.

[147] Meschler, *Spiritual Exercises,* 23. See James J. McQuade, S.J., *How to Give the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius to Lay Apostles* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1962), 15, 82.

Isaiah. We learn again to trust our own experiences and to read them as a covenanted history. This kind of preparation stirs the energies of the King.[148]

The Archetype of the King

Who is the King? First of all, the King stands at the juncture of heaven and earth, where supernatural completes natural, where nature rises to the heavens.[149] He embodies in his own centered self the divine order for the realm. In a way, he is its order, the living point at which God's governance and earthly life conjoin. His decrees, therefore, are not arbitrary rulings but laws that state the way things really are. When the King declares a holiday, the realm truly celebrates. He has told them how they are.

Jesus was speaking in the full King energy when he enunciated in the Beatitudes the way things are. The poor are blest because the King said so; the King could say so because he knew in himself that the poor are in fact blest in possessing the Reign of God. Those who mourn are blest because the King said so; the King said so because he knew in himself that those who mourn are comforted in the Kingdom by its laws, namely, the way things actually work.

Then, second, the King has only to be himself and to be present to make everything fertile. In his person he is the conduit of livelihood from the heavens to the earth; all Kings are in a way the enlivening Sun King. When the King walks in his own way, the realm spontaneously blossoms and fructifies; for he aligns in himself the powers of nature with the powers of the divine. The Kings of the Old Testament had two duties: to walk in the way of the Lord and to be fruitful in progeny (hence their many wives). In His Kingly energy, Jesus told the disciples that they had only to remain in him, like branches on a vine, and they would be cosmically fruitful.

And finally, the King blesses. One of his most typical acts is to give awards, titles, and honors to his people. Thus, as Matthew records it, just before giving them a great discourse on the new laws established in his self, Jesus gave his disciples the solemn blessing of the Beatitudes and then bestowed on them honors and titles, pronouncing them the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Robert Moore judges that one of the most abysmal lacks in the rearing of young males today is the loss of this blessing.[150] In my experience, young

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[148] This is one way to understand the excellent thrust given preparation days by John A. Veltri, S.J., *Annotation 19: Tentative Edition,* vol. 2 of *Orientations* (Guelph, Ontario: Loyola House, 1981), A1–A6.

[149] Bly, *Iron John,* 106-20; Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior,* 49–74; Arnold, *Wildmen, Warriors,* 112–20.

[150] Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior,* 61.

diocesan priests and the younger Jesuits also feel this lack. Could it be that the reason we older Jesuits do not bless the younger is that we have never wakened in ourselves the King?

The King and the Examen

The examen, it seems to me, is the locus for that wakening. Robert Moore's vivid description of the King vividly helps see why.

> The King archetype in its fullness possesses the qualities of order, of reasonable and rational patterning, of integration and integrity in the masculine psyche. It stabilizes chaotic emotion and out-of-control behaviors. It gives stability and centeredness. It brings calm. And in its "fertilizing" and centeredness, it mediates vitality, life-force, and joy. It brings maintenance and balance. It defends our own sense of inner order, our own integrity of being and of purpose, our own central calmness about who we are, and our essential unassailability and certainty in our masculine identity. It looks upon the world with a firm but kindly eye. It sees others in all their weakness and in all their talent and worth. It honors them and promotes them. It guides them and nurtures them toward their own fullness of being. It is not envious, because it is secure, as the King, in its own worth. It rewards and encourages creativity in us and in others.[151]

The "King archetype" names the energies that a companion of Jesus needs to bring to the examen in our time. Read the paragraph again substituting "King's examen" and you will see why: The King's examen "possesses the qualities of order, of reasonable and rational patterning," "gives stability and centeredness," "sees others in all their weakness and in all their talent and worth," "rewards and encourages creativity in us and in others," and so on.

Psychologically, we wake precisely this King's energy when we pray the Contemplation. In that exercise we feel our direct, intimate relationship with God who gives us all good gifts, including our self, and dwells in them, laboring for us. We experience our own integrity, find ourselves quietly centered and interiorly ordered. As calm as the heart of the sun, we feel a proclivity to regenerate in others what God has achieved in our selves. If we have a good experience of the Contemplation, we know we need not envy anyone else or even feel any sorrowful lack; we know who we are and feel unshakable as we look out on the rest of creatures. This all configures into the archetypical King energy.

Plainly, this is the energy that charges Aschenbrenner's awareness examen. In the context of ongoing creation and the gift of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, the whole ground for asking how I have done—far from external law

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[151] Ibid., 61f.

and imposed obligation—has shifted to the congruence of things with my authentic self. In this examen, I judge those affects and desires holy that I feel are consonant with or grow out of my self—a chosen, consecrated self. Yet this is the King's energy, always in touch with God the Other and steadily watching out for the others in my life world. In the King energy, I see my companions as they are, without envy, insecurity, or disinterest, and I am drawn to attend to the projects of the Reign that we work in together.

The King energy transmutes the last question of the first colloquy in the First Week from *What must I do* for Christ to *What might I do* for Christ. That gives a deeper meaning to the last congregations' statements on availability and discernment. As we saw, the Thirty-Second Congregation answered its own question about being Jesuit today by defining availability in a new way. Sinners, we are placed with God's Son, not to go out like Warriors to do battle beneath his banner, but to find in our own integrated selves, like Kings, the divine order emanating from the Son. That divine order—our congregations, the ecumenical council, and the bishops' synod assure us—is the faith that does justice.

No man among us will ever find it rising up out of the welter of emotion, affect, conceptual paradigm, prejudice, misconception, comfort, selfishness, and the rest—the very chaos out of which God our Creator and Lord keeps calling each one of us into a unique, rational, and holy existence—unless he gives time to steady self-examination. Say that another way: The task given us by the Company to discern in our selves and in our community and the task given us by the Gospels and the Church to read the signs of the times are both rooted in the prayer we call the examen.

Conclusion: A New Communal Inwardness

St. Louis University, 1993, last thing in a wet February evening. Joe Tetlow sits in his reading chair and says Evening Prayer. He reads an American biography. His eyes begin to burn and he puts the book down. His examen: "O Lord, you are my God in whom I trust. Where are we? Good, today, very good to be here. Thank you for Trafford Maher and Vince Orlando; I owe them. Guard them. No great desire, but addiction: the need to write the perfect, Platonic-form article for Studies. Let it be helpful. Let it be finished. I do not understand a lot, even some of what I wrote. You are very great. Grant me balance with my reteatant. And patience with Ken—he tries me but wants me to try to help. I regret that I chose the New York Times *instead of some quiet time with you to face my anxiety with the seminar.*

Foolishness, Lord; your foolish man. Thank you for giving me your name, Joy. I do not fear the night." Not finished, he falls asleep. In the morning at prayer, he will remember other things from the day and wonder once again what makes him so slow to get to the examen.

The examen has never been anything but a way of praying. It still is, though its shape has changed considerably since 1920, as have the Jesuits who make it. Its purpose, like any prayer's, is to find the all-present God who acts busily in creation.

In the past, Jesuits made the examination of conscience because our way of life called for it. We had clear legislation to follow and, in any case, the exercise belonged to our American devotional Catholicism, following the purgative way. Our examen was nonetheless true prayer: we prayed the examen to find the transcendent God who governed all things powerfully according to his eternal plan. Good Warriors, we embraced that plan and sought God's will by living passionately obedient. We were task oriented and code governed. We knew what we were set to do; we knew when and how we failed.

In years past, all of us made this five-point exercise simultaneously, summoned by the fiery bell, and together, sustained by our deep esprit de corps. For we all knew the code—reading at table kept us mindful—and we felt loyalty to and a strong common purpose in our Jesuit apostolates. When we failed our ideal or found it too low, we let ourselves feel shame; when we broke the law or the rule, we let ourselves feel guilt. We were careful to account for our failures; we were serving a truly demanding, if loving and fatherly, God. We never denied our core goodness; we just did not pay much attention to it.

The More Recent Examen

More recently, since the council and the Thirty-Second Congregation, the Church has led us to a renewed awareness that we are members of the Body of Christ, a princely people. We go to our examen now, each in his own time, to find an immanent God who creates unceasingly and works incessantly in our self and among us in our life world. We find God not so much governing as guiding; we find not an established divine plan but an unfolding divine project in which God has invited us sinners to cooperate. We are trying, in all of our prayer, to find God's concrete hopes for the cosmos and for our selves.

To find those divine hopes, we have learned to look not only in the Church's and the Company's desires but in our own. We have been led by the Spirit to see that each man's gifts are important to the coming Reign. This is a lot to accept—a lot to hope for—and we will accept the importance of our own gifts and desires to God's project only to the extent that we can wake the King's energies in our selves. For we are called to go beyond "God's acceptance." If we are to be generative in our apostolic lives, we must grow in the grace of our chosenness. We stand kinglike at the juncture of heaven and earth not only when we receive the Body and Blood of Christ but also when we examine our consciousness to find what Christ hopes in us and through us.

The Examen and Solidarity

Almost ironically, just as we grew to appreciate how God in Christ cherishes each single one of us and sends us out, we also grew to appreciate how we are webbed into social structures that are sinful. In our examen we would still have to look at what we have done; now we have to look behind our doing. For what we have done expresses perspectives, perceptions, values, and strategic decisions. Some of them may be holy, but some of them may be unholy. Some of them may be God moving in us, but some of them may instead be our life world germinating in us.

The Company has repeatedly called us to communal discernment during the past two decades. We have not responded well precisely because each of us has not looked behind his doing into his own perspectives, perceptions, values, and decisions to find where God is in them and where God is not in them. Hence, it is no surprise that the man is too common among us who does not really trust and value his authentic desires for himself, the Company, and the Church.

To look at that another way, in the examen I am gauging my genuine apostolic availability. I am not trying to find an abstraction; my availability either means some very concrete things or it is flummery, a mask over my unwillingness. We all know the man who declares fervently that he will do whatever superiors ask him to do and somehow ends up not doing very much. When I look seriously into my spirit, I am not likely to find a generic desire to be perfectly obedient or simply to do a great work. More likely, I will find that I want, for example, to chair my academic department, or to live and work with the Northside poor, or to do my theology in Central America, or to build up the adult-formation program. I may find that I want to leave my current apostolate. I may find, to my surprise, that I want something passionately. Am I free to risk? What exactly do I now feel free to do? to refuse to do? What tasks am I saying yes to, how, and in what spirit? What am I saying no to, how, and in what spirit?

Obviously, the examen takes us into discernment, past our consciences, as Aschenbrenner put it, into our consciousness. But that does not mean we evanesce into our inner world. On the contrary, the real examen demands that when we go into our consciousness, we ask, What am I doing? With whom? What does it mean to anybody? My effort here is to try to put my own perspectives, perceptions, values, and desires in line with Christ's in the Church, so that I can make a solid contribution to the communal discernment that we must make.

Thirty-Third Congregation

The last two general congregations called on us to enlarge our vision of the examen in this way. The Thirty-Third Congregation, in its summary statement, stated its belief that the greater service of God "calls for a review of all our ministries, both traditional and new."

> Such a review includes: . . . an examen and reflection inspired by the Ignatian tradition; a personal and communitarian conversion necessary in order to become "contemplatives in action"; an effort to live an indifference and availability that will enable us to find God in all things; and a transformation of our habitual patterns of thought through a constant interplay of experience, reflection and action.[152]

The congregation hardly thought we would achieve all this in the solitude of our rooms. It understood clearly that if our examen is "inspired by the Ignatian tradition," it must include the deeply personal dialogue that the first companions shared. For each man's examen is about more than himself and it is for more than himself.

We are webbed and embedded in culture. We feel Americanly, have regional tastes, value things as academicians or pastors, desire as Irish or Hispanic or African Americans. No one of us can interpret all this alone. For "our predispositions and longings may be as misguided as our ideas," and all three together make us liable to self-deception and miserably nearsighted in reading the signs of the times.[153] Since meaning is among us—the meaning of each word, obviously, and the meaning of life, too—no one will securely find it in isolation. The Thirty-Second Congregation was impressed by "the extent to which our contemporaries depend on one another in their outlook, aspirations and religious concepts."[154] We are no different than our contemporaries in this dependence, and Jesuits have consciously chosen to depend on one another to an even greater extent, precisely in "outlook, aspirations and religious concepts."

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[152] *GC 33,* pt. 2, section E, "Our Way of Proceeding," ¶43.

[153] Unger, *Passion,* 102.

[154] *GC 32* dec. 4, ¶118.

For all that, each of us is being called on (urgently at present to prepare for the Thirty-Fourth Congregation) to come to the greatest clarity God will give him about personal and corporate apostolic commitments. There, in that discernment, lies the work of the examen, far from nitpicking and self-flagellation. Of course personal holiness is at issue; each of us knows he needs the examen for that. What we are not so clear about is the issue *among us:* clarity in "the apostolic directions of our mission." This clarity will come, the Thirty-Third Congregation insisted, "only when we are faithful to the process and conditions of communal discernment."[155] First among those conditions is that each man among us keep in daily contact with what the Spirit moves him to do or not to do and how his own spirit interprets our corporate mission as well as his own. That's the work to take to the examen.

The Antidote to Postmodern Loneliness

What the Spirit moves him to value and to do unavoidably involves each man's concrete relations with those around him. So those relations are fully implicated in this process of discernment and of interpretation. How are my spiritual friends? Does any of them need me at this time? How do things stand between me and my Jesuit and other colleagues? Who needs my prayers? Do I need to promote some communal effort? Cooperate better with someone else's initiative? Do I need to tell the superior anything, or the director of the work? What do I need to know from them and why haven't I asked?

It must be plain that the authentic Jesuit examen offers a formidable tool against isolation and loneliness. Honestly made, the examen steadily explores each important relationship in a man's life. An excellent format for an exercise—taught me by a tertian from Ireland—involves taking a Rolodex of friends and colleagues and flipping through it one by one. The tertian has an admirable attitude toward friendship in the Lord. He recognizes it as truly human love, indisputably a particular friendship. He agrees with Roberto Unger, however, that in "the sexless register of love" between people not tied by family ties, the "elemental basis is the experience of desiring the freedom of another, the wish to give another person to himself."[156] In the Company the basis of our desires is our mutual freedom in Christ Jesus and the expression of that divine freedom is our friendship in the Lord.

This seems to argue that no one of us can make a fully authentic examen unless all of us are creating apostolic community. Does this sound like a tired holdover from the seventies? Well, the Thirty-Second Congregation declared bluntly that a man's success in "the living practice of the account of

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[155] *GC 33,* ¶45.

[156] Unger, *Passion,* 228.

conscience" presupposes that "with the help of his companions, he engage in a continual, communitarian reflection" on their apostolate.[157] The connection between active community membership and a generous examen may be hard to make theoretically. But the King feels better when the realm is in good order; a Jesuit does better when he and his companions are witnessing to one another the deep ordering God works to his divine purposes even in all our sinfulness and limitations.

Making a real examen also webs me among our lay and religious colleagues. I do not see how any Jesuit can make an authentic examen who does not regularly examine the affections, preferences, revulsions, and tensions he feels towards his colleagues. Our apostolic works are like an orchestra: every instrument has to be reasonably in tune with the rest or the sound goes sour.

Tuning the Individual Instrument

The examen, after all, begins with the individual, so it might be more candid if I speak personally here. If the examen is so important and if it solves so many postmodern problems, why do I still find it problematic? Why do I omit it so readily? I believe the root reasons transcend history and were as valid in 1920 as they are now. I suggest three.

The first comes from the First Week of *Spiritual Exercises:* I do not want to know my sin any further than I already know it. This means that I do not really want to have "a deep understanding of my sins from within, and [to] feel revolted by them," as Master Ignatius wrote in *Spiritual Exercises,* [63]. It means that I fear sensing "the disorder in the way I have been behaving." I am not certain that I have the courage to "have insight into the world, so that I come to feel disdain for it all and put away from me everything that is vain and worldly." Continued and greater clarity about sin and its disorder is what the earliest companions were searching for when they insisted that "after the Exercises are over, the practice [of the examination of conscience] ought to be for life."[158] We need that same clarity.

The second reason relates to the Second Week: As the examen helps me see my sin more clearly, it also confronts me with my powerlessness over sin. I am not able to defeat the disorder in my own self, let alone the disorder in my life world that I experience daily. I am powerless to keep from disorder my Company, the American Church, my own community, and so on. American males—probably like males everywhere except in Gaugin's Tahiti—are particularly reluctant to feel powerless and not in control. All of us resist that

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[157] *GC 32,* dec. 4, ¶116.

[158] "Directorium, 1599," in *Directoria (1540–1599),* chap. 13, no. 4, p. 647.

knowledge, tempted as Satan was to self-sufficiency, the great lie told by the creature to himself. One of the deepest resistances I feel to the authentic examen is an ineradicable need to keep control, the disorder that keeps most of us away from love of Jesus Christ.

And I surely do not want to hear about addictions, one of the latest metaphors for sin borrowed from psychological health. The examen shows us the truth that we are addicted in many ways: to coffee, alcohol, cuisine's art, and also to position, work, approval, responsibility, intimacy, news, and a good deal more. "To be alive is to be addicted, and to be alive and addicted is to stand in need of grace."[159]

These addictions, which used to be called attachments, are not harmless in consecrated men. They unavoidably entail a diminution of inner freedom, a diminished attention to our Beloved, damage to our true dignity, and confusion of our motives. We would just as soon keep them; God would just as soon free us of them; and the Holy Spirit will move in us at the time God chooses to free us of them if only we are willing.

As Gerald G. May writes about himself, "Much in me believes we human beings *should* be attached, impure, imperfect."[160] I really want to cling to some addictions, which I consider harmless; I honestly feel that it would be risky to try to rid myself of all addictions. But an authentic examen teaches me the truth about my addiction to control. "These feelings arise neither from humility nor common sense, but from the part of me that really is against love, the part that sincerely wants to cling to the slavery of addiction, the part that is terrified by the prospect of being whole, responsible, and free for love."[161] It is genuinely frightening and, from time to time, terrifying to be invited by God into purity of heart and into divine love.

This is the third reason why I resist continuing the examen wholeheartedly, and it is related to the Third Week. I resist love, mostly passively. This has meant that I have refused many times over to submit to those "musts" that are God's love giving me shape as a man. I have certainly faced them as did Jesus of Nazareth, who felt that he had to go to the Jordan and be baptized, to put up—for how long!—with His disciples' deafness, to face death in Jerusalem. Each of us, at various times, finds certain "musts" in his life. Very commonly, they entail behavior of the most banal kind: not eating or drinking whatever we feel like eating or drinking, having to exercise regularly, having to get interested in another job or another person. Any man at times gets turned on sexually all

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[159] Gerald G. May, M.D., *Addiction and Grace* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 11.

[160] Ibid, 143.

[161] Ibid., 143f.

too readily and then he faces his own "musts" in this: more solitude or more serious companionship, more prayer or more exercise, more ascesis or more play. We will not be so aware of these "musts" without the examen, or find the hope-filled courage to embrace them.

We also find out through the examen that we are following some unspoken "musts." Men overextend themselves, decision by decision, and then wonder, amazed, how they got there. It hits me this way, with half a laugh: Who the hell wrote all those things in my calendar? We take up a side apostolate and it is suddenly absorbing our main strength, which we never chose to happen, or better, which we chose to happen without being aware of our choice. Or again, we come to realize in the exercise of the examen that we no longer do what we have long done (pray in the morning, keep touch with a close friend, beg God for freedom from an addiction), or that we have begun to do what we never chose to do (two drinks before dinner, arguing vehemently, coming late). We do not make the examen, perhaps, because we prefer to choose in confusion than in clarity.

Making the examen means choosing clarity. Fidelity to this exercise really means fidelity to God's summons to live as contemplatives in action, as Aschenbrenner taught us twenty years ago. It means fidelity to my consecration, not in inward abstraction, but in this Company whose members live and labor now. The examen means finding out what I truly desire for myself, for the Company, for the Church, even for my life world. It means finding the balance to acknowledge that what God achieves in me, he intends to make important to those around me. Then I exult, not in my self, but in God my Savior.

Since it is prayer, I find my way to pray the examen. I can make the five points if God charges me with the Warrior's energies. I can make Aschenbrenner's consciousness examination. I can center before God and let the stream of my consciousness run before him. I can consider concretely where I stand with each companion and each man and woman in my life, and where I stand in our projects. I can take the Company's latest documents to find out whether I am "thinking with the Church" or not. Some men may keep the same method for life; most of us shift and change. The main thing is to be willing.

The willingness to make the examen is an exercise of the virtue of hope, leading into love. For keeping this practice, we find out where God leads us both in larger externals and in intimate inwardness. After enough years, we eventually discern in the true examen the altogether splendid and inconvenient truth that I have come to love God truly and loyally, and his Son, who is my Lord and my good brother, both, Jesus of Nazareth who became the Christ. To him be glory forever. ■

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

Thanks for another fine issue, "Toward General Congregation 34" (September 1993). I enjoyed the "untold" story.

I also appreciate the translations of historical documents that are occasionally added at the end of an issue. They keep us in touch with our "roots." I do want to take issue, however, with the description of Antonio Araoz as "one of the secondary patriarchs of the Society." Thank God that he was not!

Araoz was Ignatius's relative by marriage (not his nephew, as the introduction to the translation asserts). He was the nephew of his sister-in-law, Magdalena de Araoz. As for his character, it would be hard to find anyone in the history of the Society who curried power more and who caused more problems for superiors.

Among the weaknesses of Ignatius were his overindulgence of his relatives, of his early companions, and of those in authority. He tolerated in them what he would never permit in others. This is the case with Araoz.

Araoz was too closely allied with those in power. In fact, from 1565 he gave up ministry altogether, had two Jesuit lay brothers for servants, and lived out his life in the Spanish court at the side of his friend Count Rui Gomez, the most powerful man in Spain after Philip II. (See John O'Malley, *The Early Jesuits* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993], 62.) He also fought all his life for the exclusion of those of Jewish origin from the ranks of the Society. Of course, the Society didn't cave in to the cry for *limpieza de sangre* until after he died. Perhaps in this sense he was, ironically, a "secondary patriarch of the Society."

In light of this, Palmer's fine translation of Araoz's talk helps us once again see the gap between Jesuit rhetoric and lived reality. Araoz lavishly praises obedience but had his own idiosyncratic way of living it. Neither Ignatius nor Laínez could do anything with him.

James W. Reites, S.J.
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Editor:

I just received John Baldovin's *Christian Liturgy: An Annotated Bibliography for Jesuits* (November 1993). It looks like a very helpful instrument.

"For your information" of that same issue contained the remark "The first printed work by a Jesuit, of course, was St. Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, published in 1548." That is not the case, because the very first book ever published by a Jesuit was Peter Canisius's scholarly edition of the sermons of John Tauler, printed in Cologne in 1543 under the pseudonym "Petrus Noviomagus." Long live the Dutch!

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(Fr. Begheyn is correct. St. Peter Canisius entered the Society on May 8, 1543. The edition of Tauler, dedicated to the archbishop of Lund and primate of Sweden, was published on June 3, 1543. ED.)

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